
Letters of an Old Methodist To His Son in the Ministry

By Robert Allen
of
Tippecanoe, Indiana



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LETTER ONE

I

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: I am glad to hear that you are well again, though I confess that I am still a little troubled about your health. A man like you, with an ancestry that helped to make the West in the pioneer days and helped to make the East a little further back and with a constitution built up on an Indiana farm behind a plow and which has never been undermined by tobacco or liquor, has no right to be sick. I don't go much on Christian Science but at the same time I don't believe that sickness is a particular means of grace. I think that the Creator wants us to be well—every one of us—just as He wants us to be sensible and right-minded about all things.

Of course I am not saying that the Lord cannot use sickness for our good. Some people cannot learn their duty except through neuralgia and rheumatism and toothache. And then there are a good many who get sick through waiting on the people who are too weak or incompetent or lazy to look after themselves. Besides, there are the men and women who become invalids over worrying about boys away at college or in the theological school who have eaten too much ice cream or have neglected to take enough exercise.

My boy, take care of your health. It is the

best gift God has given you, for without it none of His other gifts will be of much help to you or to any one else through you, and the Lord will not take it well if you trifle with it.

I know there are some preachers who think if they go around looking pale and solemn like and talking in a whisper their congregations will have more sympathy for them and that perhaps this sympathy will take the form of a trip to California or Florida or Europe. Now there was Brother Simpson who, you remember, preached for us the year you went away to college. He used to walk in a measured sort of way with his eyes on the ground and talked as though he was half-choked all the time. When he preached you could hardly hear him twenty feet away. He hinted several times about his need of a change. At last, at the fourth quarterly conference, old Brother Gibson got up and said he thought our minister was too delicate for our climate and that he believed, much as we loved Brother Simpson, we ought to consent to have the bishop transfer him to another field. At that the minister jumped up and said, in a voice that was certainly stronger than he had shown for several months, that he was much better than he had been and that he hoped by conference time he would be almost a well man. And he was. The very next Sunday after the quarterly conference he preached with a good round voice on the text, "Be strong and of good courage."

Now I don't mean to say that our preacher was

trying to deceive any one, but he had somehow got it into his head that he needed pity and that the only way to get it was to appear to be sick. That is a great mistake. Real trouble does make people sympathetic, but sniffing arouses only opposition and disgust. At least that has been my observation. It is strength, not weakness, that we need to-day in our preachers. The Lord knows there is enough for them to do. We want men, not weaklings and invalids, to lead us. It is manhood that appeals to the people, not sentimentality.

I say it is manhood the people want; and the foundation of manhood is a good body. Of course, I don't believe that the body is all or the principal thing. So far as hogs are concerned I don't care what they think, or whether they think at all. What I want of them is meat. But with a horse it is different. I look for brains in a horse. At the same time, an intellectual horse that can't pull his load on a straight road I have no use for. I look at the matter about the same way in the case of men. I don't believe the body is everything, but it is the foundation of everything, at least of all that has to do with this life. How we shall get along in the other world I don't pretend to know and I ain't bothering my head about it. Here we have bodies, and if they ain't kept in good order we not only can't pull our loads, but it won't be long before there will be something the matter with the thinking machines inside them.

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I believe a whole lot of these fads we read about are due to late hours and pink teas and that sort of thing. I may be mistaken, but I believe when it is run down you'll find that Christian Science was born of eating the new breakfast foods. The Christian Scientist believes that matter is nothing, and certainly those foods are the next thing to nothing.

Speaking of foods, I want to say that you are making a mistake in trying to live too cheaply. Cut down your expenses on neckties, cut out the barber's bill by letting your hair and whiskers grow, cut down on underwear if necessary, but see that you get food that is well cooked and plenty of it. I don't like your students' clubs very well and the restaurants are not much better. Get into a good boarding-house or, what is better, a good private home, if possible the home of a man who works out of doors and whose wife is a wholesome, motherly woman that knows how to cook plain food well and has a lot of respect for a man's stomach.

Begin the day right by taking a cold bath with a hard rub afterwards, saying your prayers, reading your Bible and eating a good breakfast. Have confidence in your teeth and enough respect for your food to chew it awhile. Then when you have swallowed it, let it go on its journey without any concern about how it is faring. Take an hour's outdoor exercise after breakfast. Your gymnasium is all right in its place, but it is at best only a makeshift. The

world is your gymnasium. Think of our dog or cat or my trotter needing a gymnasium in order to develop their muscles. Of course, if there was no out-of-doors, it might be all right to put them through a course of training in a gymnasium. But as things are I think they will be kept in pretty good condition without the gymnasium. At least, they are eating their regular meals without showing any loss of appetite. Take your hour's exercise after breakfast, not before, either walking or riding your bicycle, and make the last fifteen minutes of the hour tell. Limber up and make the sweat glands do their full work. At four o'clock in the afternoon drop your books and walk or ride until supper time. If your studies interfere with this programme change your hours of exercise, but do not shorten them. Just before you go to bed take a good run or a sharp walk for half a mile. You ought to sleep eight hours at least.

If you follow this plan strictly, I will not promise you big muscles, but I will assure you what our cat has—quickness of limb, vitality and a good appetite. And you will like your study. I have no patience with the people who have to drag themselves to their books, nor on the other hand with those who overstudy, as it is called. No one can overstudy unless he steals from exercise or sleep or his three good meals a day. The harder you think the better. Don't be afraid of hard study. It is close rooms, too little sleep, poor food, lack of outdoor exercise and mean-

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ness that kill. Hard thinking, like hard work, if everything else is all right, is good for every one. I know it, for I have done some hard thinking myself two or three times in my life and it always had a good effect on me. There are thousands of people suffering from underthinking for one who thinks too much. I mean nothing personal, of course.

I note what you say about breaking into one of the students' rooms and helping yourself to his apples. It must have been very amusing, especially to the owner of the apples. Now, don't you think it is about time you gave up this schoolboy nonsense? Isn't it time you began seriously to consider the practical bearings of the golden rule? Or is it true that college and seminary students are so busy studying ancient history that they haven't got along as far as the beginning of the first century *anno domini*?

I know what you will say: that I cannot appreciate college spirit. Perhaps not. But I think I do know something about the difference between children and men. Let me see, was it not St. Paul who said that when he became a man he put away childish things? You are old enough now to cut out the "Rah, rah" business altogether. You are preparing for serious work and you ought to be serious. You know well enough that I don't want you to look as though your whole work was to preach funeral sermons—though I never could understand why a minister should look so wonderfully sad even at a funeral.

Do we not say, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord"? But you are not preparing—at least I have not been paying your expenses with that in view—to lead the rooting, hooting, tooting, or whatever you call that tin-whistle business, at your college games. If I understand aright, you are getting ready to save men's souls. To do that as well as possible is the reason for your spending three years at the seminary and why your mother and myself are skimping along as well as we can and denying the other children in order to keep you there.

You are our first-born, and in a tender moment we dedicated you to the ministry in the church in which your mother was raised and at whose altars I was converted. I can see the scene yet. I was a young fellow, somewhat wild and wayward it must be admitted, but I had begun going to church—going with your mother, who was then the handsomest girl, as she now is the handsomest woman, in the county. One night the Methodists were having protracted meetings and Elder Morgan—he was young Morgan then—was preaching. I don't know just what he said, I don't remember the text, but I do know that it was a wonderful sermon, for it made me see myself the sinner that I was—everything lost unless God had pity on me. But just then it seemed to me that the Lord showed me His hands—those wounded hands—and said, "This was done for you; come and follow Me." Well, I rose right then and walked up to the mourners'

bench and knelt down there. I don't know what was said or done, but I had hardly knelt down before the burden of sin rolled off my back just as though all the strings had been cut at once and I felt as though I could jump over the ten-rail fence on our farm. But I didn't jump, for old Sister Bennett shouted "Glory!" so loud and several more said "Amen" with so much energy that I was a little relieved. And then the tears came, tears of rejoicing they were, and then I rose and told how happy I was. But I need not have told, for every one could have read it on my face, I guess.

But I mustn't trouble you with this story, which you have heard in one way or another ever since you were born. Somehow, I haven't much else to tell but this story of Christ's love. I have grown a little, but it is His love I see all along the way. But what I was going to say was this: It was in memory of that night and that experience that your mother and I, before you were an hour old, prayed that God would choose you to be one of His ministers. You know that we have not forced you to enter the ministry, or even urged you. We wanted you to be influenced only by the still small voice and to enter the ministry on your own conviction of the inward call. Now that you have decided the matter yourself and will soon be ready to take up your great work of saving men, I want you to be serious, attentive to your books and training your body so that it will stand any strain

you are called upon to bear. The call to preach I regard as a call to preach with all your God-given powers developed to their very highest point of efficiency and all working in beautiful harmony together.

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER TWO

II

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: I was much pleased with your last letter—at least, with a part of it. It shows that you have the making of a man in you, for you seem to be able to take advice without getting mad about it. How well you follow advice I don't know. You were always a little head-strong, though you came by it all right, for your mother is wonderfully set in her way. I have had pretty hard work at different times bringing her round. But I think she is finding it easier as she gets older and then, perhaps, I am a little easier coaxed than I used to be from the straight and narrow path of duty. At least, I call it duty, though your ma says that I don't always seem to know the difference between duty and having my own way. Well, there may be something in that, but I warn you, Henry, that women will have the last word. It seems to be their nature. Still, in most cases, their last word is their best.

You spoke in your letter about taking elocution at \$4.00 an hour. Well, I don't want to say you can't do it, but if you had to earn that \$4.00 as a farm hand, would you spend it for elocution at that price? Let me see, I think it would take you something like three days to earn that \$4.00. Is one elocution lesson worth three days' hard

work? Look at it another way. Is the elocution worth \$4.00 of my money? Now, don't think that I don't care to have you speak well. You must do that or you can't hope to be a *preacher* at all. All the great preachers are good speakers. They don't speak like the elocutionists, but they speak well. Their voices are good. They speak distinctly and loud enough for every one to understand what they are saying. Now, I thought when you were home at Christmas that you had no particular trouble with your talking apparatus. And at prayer-meeting, I remember, you spoke so that almost every one could understand you. You did use some pretty big words, I admit, but your voice was real good. You spoke just as you do to us at home; in a conversational sort of way that was real pleasant to hear. You didn't have any preacher tones—which I liked. I never could understand why a preacher should not preach and pray in the same voice that he uses when he talks to his mother. Isn't God our Father and shouldn't we talk to Him and about Him in the voice He gave us, rather than in some other voice that some people think is a little more polite and reverent? Henry, whatever else you do, don't be guilty of cant. I know God hates it and I am pretty sure all honest men do, whatever may be their own faults.

But I must come back to my text, as one of our preachers used to say—and then he would turn his back on the text for another quarter of an hour or until he was afraid we might think he

had forgotten that he had ever taken a text. To come back to the text, I want to impress this upon you, that it's just good, plain talking we want from our ministers, not any sort of skyrocket oratory with waving of arms and stagey attitudes. I know very well that that sort of thing is praised by some people, but it is not held in much respect by the solid portion of the church. Somehow, it makes me feel just a little creepy when anything theatrical is indulged in by our preachers. I am afraid of how it will end and then the attention is taken from the message. As I understand it, the preacher is not called upon to impress people with his learning or his fine speaking; nor is he expected to please his hearers merely, but to declare his message so that it will take hold of the heart and the head, but principally the heart; for I have observed that the head seldom, if ever, leads, but always follows, the heart.

But about this matter of elocution, I can imagine you saying that I don't know anything about it. Why, Henry, the elocutionists are thicker down here than blackberries. You remember old Brother Ryder's daughter—the one with the red hair—I believe they call it golden brown now, but it is red all the same. Well, that same red-headed girl of Ryder's went away for a year to an elocution school and I declare, Henry, if she don't act as though she had gone plumb daft. She can't go to a neighbour's to borrow a cup of flour but she must walk as though she was on

stilts; and when she gets into the house she strikes an attitude, or whatever you call it, for all the world like a turkey gobbler when he wants to show off his feathers and his voice to the lesser fry of the barnyard. And for the life of me I can't make out what it's all about—I mean the elocution of the Ryder girl. She twists her mouth into all kinds of shapes, rolls her eyes round as if she was going into a fit and talks in about ten different tones at once. I suppose she calls that tragedy. Well, I fear there will be a tragedy in this neighbourhood if that girl keeps on much longer. For the sake of variety she gives us what she calls a humorous piece, but for the life of me I can't see any joke in anything the girl says or does. Perhaps I am getting too old to see a joke any more. Certainly, I don't see much to laugh at in the rising generation, though I don't want to be understood as condemning it wholesale. I am an optimist, Henry, but I am far from thinking everything is right. No, indeed. And I know that the goings-on of Brother Ryder's daughter are not right or even sane. You ought to hear her laugh—I mean, when she is speaking her piece. She reminds me of a member of our chicken-coop trying to crow. He starts in all right, but it seems he can't finish, and the whole barnyard stands round in sympathy or disgust—I can hardly tell which—waiting for him to end that crow. Now, no human being laughs like that, unless he has been taking elocution.

Then we have a preacher in our pulpit once in a while, when our pastor is away, who tells us right in the start that he is an elocutionist. He does not say so in so many words, but the tones of his voice, his care to bring out ev-e-ry syl-la-ble with dis-tinct-ness, his churning of the air with his hands, the swelling of his chest, all tell us, more plainly than words, that he has taken elocution. He could not advertise it more conspicuously if he had written it across his back. Henry, if I had to endure that sort of thing very long I should certainly backslide or else I would have to keep out of the way of temptation altogether.

These are my sentiments about elocution as I have seen it; it is nothing against the man or the school that really teaches people to speak the English language as it should be spoken and in a way that will help those who hear to understand what is being said. If you can find some one who will teach you how to manage your voice so that you will not get out of breath when you are half through a sentence and will make you speak distinctly and loud enough for every one to hear who is supposed to be listening to you, and will help you to be yourself rather than the teacher, I would advise you to take his instruction. But I warn you that he is not to be found in every town and that you can't count on what he himself or his pupils say about his instruction.

Speaking of teachers, why can't you be your own teacher, with the help you can get from one

of your student friends? Ask the help of some sensible fellow who is not afraid to criticise you and whose judgment is good. That student will represent pretty well the sort of criticism you will meet in your ministry. Remember that you are to learn to preach to the multitude—the common people, I mean—and not to a lot of university professors, who seem to me to be men apart from the masses, with more or less peculiar views of the common life. With the help of that student critic, who is probably nearer to the masses than his teacher, learn to breathe deeply in the open air and when you are in the woods let your voice out a little. Watch out for false tones, which are the result of false feeling, of sentimentalism and that sort of thing. When you really feel deeply your voice will naturally show it. When you don't feel never try to make folks think you do, for that is the beginning of insincerity. To try to put pathos in the voice when there is none in the heart is not only bad morals but poor judgment. It is putting the cart before the horse. The voice should always be responsive to the heart and it will be if it is not cheated out of its rights. See that your heart is always right; that is the beginning of all things in a preacher. Get into sympathy with the people you are going to lead. Feel for them, not by manufacturing sympathy but by opening your heart to the Spirit. Get right with the Lord, so that He can use you and you will have all the feeling you need. Then say just what you mean—no more, no less—

and you will find that your elocution will come along all right and in good time.

This is my opinion formed after some experience and a good deal of observation. Perhaps you don't know that I stumped the county once for the legislature. I didn't get the office but I made quite a reputation as a public speaker. Some of my friends thought I ought to run for Congress some time, but I was not sure that I was qualified for so high a place. And then I was not quite certain that the people wanted me or that I wanted the honour. In fact, I am seeking no higher honour—and that is, by the way, the highest honour a parent could have—than to be the father of a first-rate Methodist preacher, one who believes in his calling, in his church, in himself and in God. Somehow I have the feeling that that will not be denied me before I pass on.

I have never doubted that you were called of God to the ministry, and those whom God calls He will not suffer to fall unless they fail to follow His leading after they have started on the good way. I have always been much affected by the case of the man that the Lord speaks of, who began a work but was not able to finish it. I have always thought there was nothing against the beginning of the work, but that the man got lazy or lost heart after he had begun. You must always remember that it is not enough to begin well; you must also finish well. God's call to begin a work is also a call to go on to perfection.

You see I believe in the good old Methodist doc-

trine of perfection. There is no place short of that we dare to stop. Is there any place this side of that where a true Christian wants to stop? I think not. No, God has called us all to be like our Master and we must improve every minute, never resting until He calls us to rest, and always watching against sin of every sort and for opportunities to do what we can to bring in the kingdom or, as I would put it, to bring sinners into the kingdom, for I am convinced that the kingdom will never have come until sinners have come into the kingdom. That means that we shall all have to work very hard, not wasting any time over foolish and useless things. I never had many talents of my own, but the Lord seems to have made me responsible for a lot of people who have talents but don't know what to do with them. But I am not complaining. No, every day I pray the Lord to save me from whining.

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER THREE

III

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: It gave much pleasure to us all here at home to hear that you had been chosen to speak at the commencement exercises of the seminary. It shows that your teachers have confidence in you that you will represent them well on that occasion, and this confidence you must do all that you can to keep. Without the confidence of your fellow-men, especially of those who know you best, it will be impossible for you to do them any good. On the other hand, you must remember that the standing of every school such as yours is in the hands of its graduates. They are the product of the institution, and by the product everything is judged. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

But what in the world is this you propose to speak on—"The higher criticism of the Hexateuch; or ninety-nine reasons why Moses did not write the books that bear his name"? Henry, what does all this mean? Have you gone crazy, or is this another of your jokes? Of course, if you have gone insane you won't acknowledge it and I can hardly believe that you would deal so lightly with so solemn a matter. You must know by this time how I look upon such things. And, besides, you must know how it affects your mother. When I read that part of your letter to

her she gasped for breath and would have fainted if I had not thrown cold water in her face. My first thought was that this was some more of your college fooling, and let it go at that. Had I thought you were in earnest I believe I would have fainted along with your mother.

Reading your letter again and putting two and two together, I am about convinced that you are serious in what you say of your choice of a subject for your commencement address. That means that my suspicion of your sanity is gaining ground. I fear that you have not been following my advice about outdoor exercise, food and sleep. Cobwebs have been getting into your brain or else a maggot has. Anyhow, you are not yourself or you are too much yourself, I hardly know which. Go and have a talk with a good doctor. Tell him all about yourself, and if you are not afraid of being hurt tell him what you propose to speak on at commencement. It's a little risky, but you had better confess all and be done with it.

I tried it yesterday on Pat McGuire. I said to him,

“Pat, what is the higher criticism of the Hexateuch?” (I pronounced it “heck-a-tooth.”)

Pat looked rather hurt at first, for he prides himself on being able to answer, right away, any question that is put to him. After thinking over the matter for quite awhile he turned to me with a quizzical smile, that showed he was not quite sure of his ground, and said:

“Hack-a-tooth, hack-a-tooth, why, it manes wan of thim tooth-pullin’ docthers—a dentist, av coorse.”

By the way, how do you pronounce that word? Is it heck-a-tooth or hecks-a-tootch? Why don’t you send along a dictionary with your letters so that we will be able at least to pronounce the words correctly even if we can’t understand their meaning?

“The higher criticism of the Hexateuch”—I must say that’s a new one on me. Why, Henry, if you were to announce that you would speak on such a subject in this town there would be a call sent in for the fire department or the police patrol or both. Which one you would come under I don’t know. Perhaps the police would take you and the fire department your speech. It might be the other way.

Tell me, Henry, what do a lot of tried and tempted men and women care about higher criticism or any kind of criticism? I would give more for one word from God through His servants, Moses, David or Isaiah than for all the critics ever wrote or even thought. A look from Christ means more to me and to burdened humanity everywhere, than all the books of the scholars, no matter how many letters they can write after their names. Critics! I want to tell you that I detest the very word. We don’t need any more criticism; we want a few more words of cheer and hope. Jesus had His critics, but the world don’t think much of them. Paul had his

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critics and so did Luther and Wesley. But where are those critics now?

“Ninety-nine reasons why Moses did not write the books that bear his name!” Well! Well! Well! Henry, this looks like bargain-counter goods. Why didn’t you make it a hundred while you were at it? At least you might have made it ninety-nine reasons and a half. Then if the ninety-nine didn’t convince the world you would still have that half reason to fall back on. Henry, I do not forget that our Master said, “Whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire”—I do not forget that and so I will not write what is in my mind, but you know what it is. You know what you are without my writing it.

Ninety-nine reasons why Moses didn’t do something! What do we care what Moses *didn’t* do? What we all want to know is what Moses or some other fellow *did*. Some years ago, I remember, there were a lot of smart people who tried hard to break into literature by trying to show that Homer didn’t write Homer’s Iliad and Shakespeare didn’t write Shakespeare’s plays. But the world didn’t take them seriously. Men and women were not interested in the subject of what Homer or Shakespeare did not do and so the critics dropped out of sight and out of mind. There will be a new crop as soon as times get bad again, just as weeds and thistles begin to grow in a field that don’t bear grain. I have always noticed that when people are not working

hard and doing well we have a new crop of these critics trying to show what somebody didn't do. Perhaps that is the reason we hear so much about what Moses couldn't have written and why you have planned to give these ninety-nine reasons why Moses couldn't or didn't write his books. Let me tell you now, lest I forget it, that whatever you write on that subject, you'll never speak it. No, sir, I'll be there, and I say you will not speak it even if I have to get on the platform and lead you off. You can't disgrace the family while I am present.

But I was speaking of the reason why we hear so much about what Moses did not do. I think it is because the church is so idle and faithless. We are not anxious enough about our neighbour's soul. Church stock just now is having something like a slump. And so the critics are busy telling us what isn't so about this and that prophet and apostle. If we don't wake up I fear that some one will be trying to prove—in the church, too—that our Lord never lived on this earth at all, that it was some one else. But when the day of awakening comes, when the old revival fires begin to burn again, as they used to in my time, we shall see the critics and doubters hunting for cover, hunting for a place to hide until the zeal of the church gets cold again.

In my day, when the church was aggressive and souls were being saved everywhere and every preacher was an evangelist, the subjects were not only plain and pointed but the preachers

spoke as though they believed every word. They spoke on such subjects as, "Now is the day of salvation," "Ye must be born again," "This is a faithful saying," "I know whom I have believed," "God forbid that I should glory," and so on. Sinners were not only pricked in their hearts but they were made to feel and know that they could be saved right then and right where they were.

Those old preachers simply lifted us out of our doubts or, if they couldn't do that, they scared us out of them or scared the doubts out of us, I don't know which. They made heaven a real place and hell a real place, too. And they proved their points by the Bible.

When I was a boy neither the theological professors nor the preachers talked about criticism. In fact, the professors were better evangelists than the preachers. I remember that I used to hear President Simpson of Asbury university once in a while and I tell you, Henry, he just brought heaven down to earth or else he lifted us up to heaven. How Christians rejoiced and sinners trembled and wept, and wept and trembled, and then shouted over their release from the power of Satan and sin! Think of Matthew Simpson talking about what Moses didn't do! But nowadays many of our preachers and professors act as though they were afraid the people would believe too much. I wonder if they never think we have trouble enough with our doubts without raising others? What we want

is faith, not doubt. If you believe anything tell it, tell it with enthusiasm, if it's nothing more than that the sun will rise to-morrow. Some people doubt even that. And if you believe in heaven tell that and show why you believe it, but don't say anything about what you don't think heaven is. Don't preach your theories about this and that. Or, if you haven't anything but a doubt or a theory then get out into the world and try hustling for your living. I can tell you when you try that you'll find there is one thing that is not doubtful nor even a theory—an empty stomach. And two other things you'll find of which there is no doubt—sin and sorrow. And when you grapple with these you'll find that no theory will cure them—only the blood of the Crucified.

Now, I had supposed that your theological school was to convince you of just this—that only Christ can cure the world's woe, and that the Bible is man's chart and guide-book in one; and that it was the business of your teachers, each and every one, not to show what somebody did not do; not to find fault with the book; not to show how many mistakes are in it; but to prove how good and true a book it is and how the preacher can use it best to point the sinner to the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

I don't say there are no mistakes in the Bible. It would be strange if there were none considering the weak men whom the Lord had to choose to write it for Him and the years and years it has been

in the world; but there are also mistakes, or what look like mistakes, in nature. I do believe it would have been better for the world if some men had never been born. I have never been able to see the good of mosquitoes. But what scientist is going around trying to prove the uselessness of this thing and that? No, he is too busy trying to find out the use of things and showing how men may use this and that to waste any time over the doubtful and the negative. I know that there will always be people who do not believe in Moses and have ninety-nine or more reasons to show why he never lived, but you can afford to leave all such persons to the Jew who is still with us and is quite competent to answer anybody who doubts either Moses' existence or his works.

If Moses didn't write those books, he made it interesting for the fellow that did write them. Or, perhaps, you have ninety-nine reasons why *no one* wrote those books. Your reasons remind me of the old story of the man who was put in jail for something or other, and after he had told his story to his lawyer the latter said:

"Why they can't put you in jail for that."

"Well," said the prisoner, "perhaps they can't, but here I am."

Now, suppose Moses were to rise up, after you had given your ninety-nine reasons why he couldn't have written his books, and say: "That is all very well, but I did write them," I rather think his one "reason" would outweigh all your

guesses. This means that whether Moses did or did not write the books, you are not able to decide either way, and it is best that you let that subject drop and go in for the things you have felt and seen. You did know the Saviour's love. Have you lost it or is it fading gradually away? Turn to the Lord with all your heart and, with His love burning in your soul, tell the people of your town, and the visitors who will be there on your graduation day, what salvation is. That is what we all need.

Your affectionate but very anxious father,
ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER FOUR

IV

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: I have received your letter about your wish to visit Europe and hear some lectures by certain wise German professors and have delayed writing until now, because I wanted time to think the matter over. Not that I didn't have my mind pretty well made up in the start, but I wanted to have the reasons a little more in hand. Don't the Bible tell us to give a reason to every man that asks us? Well, here are some of my reasons:

You ought not to go because you are too young and inexperienced and have too little judgment. Now, don't take offense, for none is meant. Since you decided to give up that Hecksatooch subject for your commencement address and chose instead "The gospel for our age," and did yourself and your teachers and, if I do say it, your father and mother so much credit, I am bound to say that my judgment of you has considerably changed. I believe you have a future if you will only keep your head and work for all that's in you.

What I mean is not that you haven't a good head, but that you haven't experience enough to appreciate what a foreign country has to give you or backbone enough to stand up against, I won't

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say its temptations, but its spirit. Europe has many things worthy of our attention, I know, but I'm not sure that it has anything that we want to imitate.

I don't doubt that those German professors you speak of are authority on some things besides beer and pretzels, but after all is said, what is it they can give you that you can't get here? You might get a degree there which would cause some weak people to regard you as an oracle or something of that sort and make you a little stiffer in your walk, but I'm sure it would not help you any to get close to Bill Smith or make you any more tender in dealing with Smith's wayward son. I don't believe it would help you so to conduct the funeral of a little child that the parents would believe that our Master had taken the little one into His own dear arms. I don't believe your degree would help you to understand the workingman. I'm sure it wouldn't make you a better preacher, by which I mean not that you would be unable to explain the meaning of the Hecksatooch (pardon the word—it slipped out) or to describe your experiences in London or Paris or Berlin, but one who could make the people believe that Christ is the best of all the friends of men. Now, if you can honestly say that I'm wrong and that your proposed trip would make you a better minister of the Lord Jesus, I don't know but that I might consent to let you go—*on your own money, of course.*

I have spoken of the spirit of the Old World.

There is a spirit of the New World also and it is very important that you keep in close touch with the American view of things. Just now, so far as it relates to you, I think this my strongest reason why I disapprove of your going to Europe, for next to being a Christian I want you to be an American. In fact, I am almost convinced that a Christian has to be an American in his outlook upon things. And I am just as sure that a true American will be a Christian. At least, he must respect Christianity.

Of course, we are a little raw in some things. I suppose we are a bit behind Europe in the matter of literature, though I won't admit that so far as Indiana is concerned. In society matters we haven't had time to study our books of etiquette as much as the idle classes of Europe have, but I notice that when one of those "scions of noble houses," as they are called, wants a woman that will really shine in his establishment he generally comes to America to get her, though why our girls should want to marry those European counts and lords I can't make out. I have seen some of them and I must say they look about as much like monkeys as men.

Coming back to what I was saying a moment ago about our rawness ain't it better to be a little raw than to be baked to a crust? That is what is the matter with the Old World. It is too dry and hard in everything. It sticks to the past without regard to whether the past was right or wrong. I believe in the past so far as it is good,

but I don't propose to be bound to it simply because it is old.

But then America has just as much to stand on, so far as the past is concerned, as Europe has. Our system of government is at bottom older than the monarchies of Europe; at least, that is the way I read history. But whether our system is ancient or not don't concern me at all. I believe it is *right* and there is a whole lot of people who agree with me, not only here at home but even in the Old World. How else do you explain the emigration to our shores? Do you suppose all these people from foreign lands come here just because they think they'll find it easier to make a living here than at home? Nonsense. They come because they believe that America has the right of it. Why, they can hardly wait until they are landed before they want to cheer for Uncle Sam. That is what makes America invincible. Its people believe in her and that is why we have that sense of destiny which our senator spoke about a few weeks ago. I ain't quite sure what destiny means, but I know it's a good word and I suspect that it stands for a good deal.

Now, what I want to impress on you is this: You can't do much for the church unless you believe in America and you can't believe in America if you haven't this spirit I have been speaking about. Whether you have it or not you will not help yourself to get it or to get more of it by going to Europe just now.

You speak of the "advantages of travel." I

think I know what that means. Haven't I been to Indianapolis once or twice? Yes, I have been around a bit, but I haven't thought it necessary to leave American soil. Let me see, when I spoke of this once before you called me provincial, didn't you? You have now been through the seminary and know whether Christ was ever out of His own country or not. Yes, I know He was in Egypt for a little while, but He didn't go there to see the country. Was He provincial, Henry? Now, when it comes to meeting the different peoples of the world it seems to me we don't have to go very far from our own dooryard to do that. All the nations are here. And as for room and scenery where will you find anything better than America? Why, the state of Texas could stow away one of those countries of Europe in its vest pocket and then forget it was there.

I admit that travel is broadening, as you say, but I want something more in a farm than a quarter-section of sand—I want soil. Going around the world, especially for a young fellow like you, makes me think of a fly going round a cheese. You have to burrow into the earth to understand it. And you can begin your burrowing here in Indiana just as well as in France or Germany, or China. And you will find more here to reward you than there, if I'm any judge. No soil like this, Henry. You remember how you enjoyed plowing it up once upon a time.

Reading your letter again I see that I have said

nothing directly in answer to your statement that you ought to do a little more studying. Why, Henry, you haven't been doing anything else, it seems to me, since you were knee-high to a grasshopper. You have been absorbing information of the Lord knows what during all these years. Some of it was good, I think ; some, I suspect, was bad. And then there was a good deal that was neither good nor bad—simply fillin'

Now you want to go to a foreign university to get some more information. Isn't there danger that all this stuff will sour on you? Ain't you afraid you'll be tempted to be a scholar when you come back, instead of a preacher? Mind, I don't say I don't like the scholar—a first-class one—but I have no use for the man who thinks himself a scholar because he has a stoop or because he can write an English sentence after a German model, or talk about evolution or the Hecksatooch. That kind of a scholar simply bores me to death, and if he happens to get into a pulpit he withers everything in sight.

Now, if you went to Germany I suspect that you would feel that you knew almost too much to be riding a circuit or spending your time visiting the homes of working people. You would want to be a professor of something right away or else you would be spending your time working on the problem of who didn't write the Hecksatooch (there it is again—I dream of that word).

No, the best thing for you, Henry, in my opin-

ion, is to imitate Moses, John the Baptist, Paul, yes, and Christ too, and spend some time alone. Take the time between now and conference in thinking about God and what He wants you to say and do. Moses was forty years in Midian, I believe, and Paul spent three years in Arabia after his conversion, where God spoke to him and where the new truth had time and opportunity to become a part of the man, so that when he came out he not only had the truth, but the truth had him. Go out in the woods and listen to the voice that sounds through the trees. Just open your mind and heart to the Spirit. Let God tell you His secrets ; for He has some for you, only He will not give them to you if you imagine you can discover them for yourself. Pray a good deal, not that you may become a great preacher like Bishop Simpson or Henry Ward Beecher, but that you may have courage to say what you believe God wants you to say, not what you want to say. Pray that you may come back with something of the sympathy of Christ for poor humanity; not as a fierce denouncer of sin so much as a tender shepherd who is seeking to bring back to the fold some of the Master's lost sheep. That will be better every way than to go to Europe and bring back a few antiques as bric-à-brac or as ideas. Come and see us for a day or two—then go to the woods.

Your affectionate father,
ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER FIVE

V

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: So you didn't altogether enjoy your visit to conference and you are not quite pleased with your appointment. Well, I must say I am not surprised. You see you were expecting too much—too much piety and too much attention to yourself on the part of the preachers. I warned you about that. I told you the preachers hadn't their wings yet and that you must not be surprised if you heard some things that seemed to show that they were *in* the world even if they were not *of* it. In fact I said, you will remember, that you needn't be surprised if you found that one or two—I wouldn't go farther than one or two—could go the world one better at its own business.

I recall, too, that I told you not to expect the bishop to meet you at the train or to invite you to take dinner with him or even to sit with the presiding-elders in the cabinet, as I believe they call it, though I have another name for it. And, last of all, I said, though I hardly believed you would remember this, that you wouldn't be expected to choose your own appointment, not because you would be unable to choose it all right, but for the reason that the Discipline says the bishop is supposed to do that—if the presiding-

elders don't object—and it ain't in human nature, even when under a bishop's coat, to throw away a chance to order around his fellow men.

Now, I don't say I am ready for a change in this matter of the appointment of our preachers. I have never been in favour of changing even from a bad system unless I was pretty sure the new would be an improvement. No method can be perfect so long as we have imperfect men to deal with—to say nothing of the women, bless them—and imperfect men to run the machinery and keep it in order. But if there was bound to be a change I would vote for writing the appointments on slips of paper and the preachers drawing them from a hat—each preacher to draw one appointment. That would be as fair to one as another and I don't know but that, in the long run, it would be about as good all-around as the present system. At least all—both preachers and members—would feel that there was no prejudice in the choice. Those who got poor places could feel no worse than they do now and, besides, each man would know that he had something like two hundred chances to one of getting another place next year—perhaps the best charge in the whole conference—while his present church could comfort itself with the thought that it would have but one chance in two hundred of getting back its present pastor. Certainly, if churches and preachers are going to look at the matter of appointments as an affliction, the

method I have suggested, if not the best, is as good as any other.

However, I am not looking for a change right away—at least, not before the next General conference, when the laymen, who are beginning to feel their oats, may kick over the traces a few times and threaten to upset the wagon. But I guess they'll take it out in kickin' The bishop, I believe, has always *read the appointments* and I suppose he always will. And so long as he don't cough when he comes to your name I believe you'd better take what comes your way and make the best of it.

That's it—*make the best of it*. My boy, if there's one thing I would save you from it is—*ingratitude*. You simply can't succeed if you are not grateful to God for His gifts; yes, and to the people, too, for their gifts, for you may be sure that, in the long run, you'll get all you deserve and probably a good deal more.

Let me tell you, in order to illustrate my point, of two preachers among the many I have known, in one way or another, during the past fifty years.

One of these preachers came to our little country church when we were living in the old farmhouse, the house in which you were born and lived as a boy. He was a young fellow when he came to us, younger than you are now, with some down on his upper lip, which I suppose he called a mustache and which he was forever stroking and rubbing even in the pulpit.

He had come to us fresh from some eastern school and fully expected to be appointed to one of our few city charges. On his way to conference he had married a young girl that wouldn't have been hurt a bit if she had been kept with her mother for a few years longer—long enough at least for her to learn how to cook a potato and to handle a broom. Well, when the two got to conference they found, much to their surprise and disgust, that all the city appointments had been handed out. The young wife said to two or three of the preachers' wives she met—she might as well have told the conference—that she thought it was real mean that her Algernon, or whatever his name was, couldn't have what he wanted, and when the appointment to our circuit was read out she broke down right in church and cried.

Of course we were all sorry about it, when we heard how they felt, but we couldn't see how we were to blame at all. In fact, if we had had our way, they wouldn't have been appointed to our charge. We had asked for another man. But we didn't propose to cry over our disappointment and, in fact, made arrangements to give the new preacher and his wife as hearty a welcome as possible. Our young folks sent over to the village and got the brass band, fifteen strong, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals and the whole outfit, to come over and play a few tunes. They played "Yankee Doodle," "Marching Through Georgia," "Home, Sweet Home" and a lot of

those tunes that cheer a fellow up. We had a big supper ready, such as only farmers' wives can cook and serve, and there was a big crowd. But I could see that neither the preacher nor his wife was happy. They kept a good deal to themselves and looked on with an expression that seemed to say that we were all considerably below their level. I am sorry now that I didn't go in to compel them to like us but I was somewhat young myself then and was just a little timid and, to tell the truth, a little hurt by their actions.

Well, to cut the story short, they didn't have a good time with us. The parsonage didn't suit, the church was too small—though it was large enough before the year was out, I can tell you—the circuit was too big, the donation visits were a bore and so on and so on. At the end of the year we drew a long breath and some of us went to conference and simply told the bishop that if he sent the young man back he'd better arrange beforehand to pay his salary, for we wouldn't. That was putting it pretty strong, I know, and we would hardly have gone that far, but it was a desperate case and we felt we must be pretty stiff. The young man was not returned to us. He was sent to another charge—a weaker one than ours; for the bishop reasoned that a man that couldn't sustain himself with us had no claim for promotion, which seemed to me a religious and common-sense view. I may add that that preacher is now a life insurance agent,

having graduated to that job from being solicitor for a book on "How to Succeed."

The other man I refer to was the very opposite of our young preacher. He was in middle life when he came to us, as fine a looking man as you ever saw. He had held some of the best appointments in the conference and was sought after by many leading churches, but his health had not been of the best in the town and he told the bishop that he wanted to be sent to a circuit where there was plenty of travelling. That was where we came in and the bishop put him down for our charge.

When we heard of it we felt a little nervous, for we feared that we would not know how to behave towards him and his wife. But we need not have troubled ourselves on that score at all, for they were not with us five minutes before we were compelled to feel that we had conferred a great favour on them by letting them come among us. They dressed well, but not so as to make us ashamed of our homespun. The parsonage was a pretty poor kind of a house, though it was about as good as any of our houses in that day, but I wish you could have seen it a few days after that preacher and his wife moved in. They had fixed it up with the help of a paper-hanger from the village and had put up some pictures and some drapery here and there until it looked to us country people like a bit of fairy-land. And when any of the farmers' wives went there to call they were received as though

they were related to the governor, and it was all done so simply, too, that every one seemed to be the one friend that was needed. And there was nothing put on, nor did this spirit pass away after a month or two.

Both the preacher and his wife acted just as though they saw in the men and women of their charge the brothers and sisters of Christ. They didn't talk religion as much as some did, they lived it every day. And we, for our part, could not do enough for them. Why, we would have given them about everything we had in the world, if they had needed anything, for their cheery ways and kindness and, more than all, their gratitude for any favour fairly made a heaven of our whole neighbourhood. And when the end of the year came, everybody in the township came round and begged them to stay another year and, though a strong church sent up a committee for them, they asked to be sent back to our circuit, saying that the past year had been the best of their lives. I don't doubt it was. But they themselves made it their best.

Now, while I am glad that you didn't go to your new charge in the same spirit as the first preacher I have described, I regret that you didn't have more of the spirit of the second. Why should a minister expect everybody in the community to run to meet him when he comes to town. Is that the way the young lawyer and doctor are received? Do they expect when they go to a new town to be received by a brass

band? I should say not. They expect to win their way and they are satisfied if, after a year or even more, they have paid expenses. There's many a farmer and business man who don't make expenses during the first year. Remember that you are the representative of the meek and lowly Nazarene, who, during His whole life, didn't have a place of His own where He could lay His head. The apostle Paul supported himself at his trade. Many of the early Methodist preachers were contented if they got off with their lives. Don't Paul tell us to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ? Well, are we all to endure hardness except the preachers? Think the matter over and see if you can't feel that you ought to be thankful for an opportunity to preach your Master's gospel without losing your life. And everything you get above that count as so much clear gain. *And be thankful.*

Your affectionate father,
ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER SIX

VI

TIPPECANOE, IND.

My Dear Henry : I count it a fortunate thing, in spite of what you say of the advantages of a city pastorate, that you have been appointed to a country charge.

For several reasons : In the first place you will learn, if you ever come to the city, as you probably will if you behave yourself, that it is made up mostly of men and women who were either born on farms or in farming communities. And you can't understand these city people unless you know a good deal by experience of their former surroundings. I don't forget that you were born on a farm yourself, but that was a good while ago, and you have been away for so many years that you have nearly forgotten how farmers live and what they are thinking about.

My second reason for preferring a country charge for you just now is that you may learn human nature pretty nearly as it is, in its most simple form—at least, in the most simple form that you are apt to find it. In the city, even in some towns, there is a tendency—I feel it here—towards artificial ways of living. You can see it in the dress, in the schools—yes, and in the churches. Somehow, city people seem to think, I really don't know why, that it won't do to be

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natural, to say and act out what they think. The women go in for fads. They have peculiar notions about the training of children, especially if they have no children of their own. They are all the time changing their foods or the time when they eat. Even your mother, sensible woman as she is, wants to try something besides the old way of living on three meals a day. Christian Science and that sort of thing you'll find in the cities, country people haven't time for these fads, and, besides, outdoor life convinces everybody who tries it that the stomach is a real thing and that only real things will satisfy it.

In the third place I am glad you are in the country that you may there test yourself as to your ability to interest, hold and save men in what we may call the rough. Let me assure you that if you can hold farmers you will succeed anywhere.

You will need, to begin with, to disabuse your mind of the thought that anything will do for farmers. He may not have gone to college, but the farmer knows a lot of things that college people know only at second hand. I know what city people think, or pretend they think, of farmers—that all they do when they come to the city is to stare at the big buildings and stand round as easy marks for confidence men and pick-pockets. Don't be fooled by what the newspapers say and the comic papers print. My own conviction is that the average farmer, as I find him here in Indiana, knows more about the

world, the real world, than the average city man who has never lived on a farm. Talk about the farmer's association with confidence men, his buying of gold bricks—why, Henry, the city fellow is a past master in that business. He is always investing in some gold-brick scheme. What is our board of trade but a device for helping city people to get rid of their money as fast as possible? What farming community would allow itself to be sold out year after year as the city does by a lot of politicians? Of course when a farmer gets into the city he is apt to seem awkward, but not any more so than the city man when he is on the farm.

The farmer is a pretty good judge of human nature and especially of preachers and sermons. Some one said to a young preacher: "In the country preach your best sermons and in the city wear your best clothes." There is sense in that. The farmer will not usually be caught by chaff. Put that down. And you needn't expect him to get excited by your dramatic appeals, as you call them. He simply won't be bamboozled. He likes good straight talk that is simple and clear and logical and goes back to a "Thus saith the Lord." So, I advise you to study your Bible just as much as you can. You can't know it too well. I speak out of a long experience and considerable observation and knowledge of human nature when I say that a minister can have no better asset, either in the country or the city, next to genuine faith in God and a real Christian charac-

ter, than a good knowledge of the Bible and an ability to quote its promises and warnings. Don't be fooled, Henry, by what you hear every little while about the modern minister being up-to-date and all that. The man who knows what sin is and what will cure it is always up-to-date. And when you know your Bible well you will not make many mistakes about these important matters.

And when I speak so emphatically about the need of a preacher knowing the Bible I don't forget that God has a word to speak directly to every man who will listen to Him. I believe God did speak to John Wesley and to Matthew Simpson and to a lot of other people in and out of the Methodist church. I don't forget that, but at the same time I would advise you to seek to get what you can from the older revelation before you spend much time looking for a new revelation. Many a time, on the farm, your mother and me had to look into a cupboard which while it was not bare, still was pretty short of cake and pie. But I never had the heart to pray the Lord to send us cake as long as we had bread. And so I advise you not to expect a special revelation until you have made all the use you can of the old. It still comes, that old revelation, with a mighty grip on my heart and conscience and I think on the hearts and consciences of men everywhere. Beside it these new opinions and new thought and all of that seem like the bubbles on a mud puddle.

And while I am on the subject I want to advise

you, if you want stories to illustrate a point and can't get suitable ones out of your own experience, as I suspect you will not, that you get them from the Bible.

The Bible stories are, in the first place, good stories and in the second place they bring back to men and women their own infancy. Every time I hear one of those Bible stories there comes to me a picture of my childhood and mother holding me in her lap and reading to me out of the dear old Book and then my old eyes fill with tears and my heart is open for the good seed. I believe that there are a good many people like me, though it is but fair to say that your mother sometimes hints that there is not another man like me in the world. At first I used to think she meant that as a compliment, but I have had my doubts of late years. But that's not here nor there. I was writing of stories for your sermons. I like them when they mean anything and really make the thought a little more clear, but I don't like them for their own sake; I mean in a sermon. And beware what big yarns you try on the farmer; he won't stand for them. He may not say anything, but don't you be deceived by his silence. Most farmers have traded horses some time in their lives and so are pretty well prepared for doubtful anecdotes. So go slow on the stories, even those about answers to prayer, unless you yourself know them to be true. There are plenty of good people who don't mean to prevaricate—isn't "prevaricate" a polite

word?—but their imagination or something else gets the better of them. Keep a good bit on your imagination, Henry, even if you have to use a swivel.

I advise you to study hard to preach, just as well as you can, and on fifty-two Sundays of the year, the simple gospel of Christ with earnestness, reasonableness, courage and tenderness. Those are pretty big words for me, I admit, and I don't know if they mean just what I think they do, but you'll understand. And I want you to have all these words in mind every time you preach. You ought always to be earnest, but don't rant. So, I say, be reasonable, but for your life don't preach what I have heard called "intellectual sermons." You ought to have courage, but never imagine that it takes any courage to scold your people or scold the world before your people. Of all failures in the pulpit I think the sour, scolding preacher the worst. You ought always to be tender, but don't, oh don't, slop over. Be a man and control yourself, or if you have to weep, weep in your closet over your sins. Just be all these things, I repeat—be earnest, reasonable, brave and tender—and with a "Thus saith the Lord," for everything you will not want for hearers or for converts. God's word will not return unto Him void. It will come back with a sinner by the hand—no, by the heart—and he will come, in all probability, to stay; whereas, if he comes through any other influence, he won't be with you long.

Of course, you can't be all of this, nor can you preach as I have pointed out, unless you are with your Master a good deal. No man ever made a preacher by following any rule. Back of everything must be the spirit, and this you can have only by walking with the Lord day by day and talking with Him a good deal in the quietness of the night. A look in His face, a word from Him will take out of your heart the coldness you'll find there after a hard day—and you'll have many hard days, if I'm any judge. Yes, a little talk with Jesus makes everything right. After such an interview you'll go to your pulpit and, as you look upon the seamed and battered faces before you, every wrinkle telling its story of sorrow and heartache and misunderstanding, you will seem to see there, among your people, the form of the Crucified with the marks of the nails in His hands and the mark of the spear on His side. And as you look at Him I almost think you'll see Him raise His hand and point at the people before you and say: "See, these are the sheep of My pasture, feed them for Me." With such a vision before you you'll not feel like giving them chaff or briers for their spiritual meal.

God bless you, my dear boy, and make you a true minister of Christ, one who knows the burdens of his people because he shares them every day.

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER SEVEN

VII

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry : You ought to get into the habit, as soon as you can turn yourself, of making pastoral visits. I use the word "habit" because I want you to have the matter so well fixed that when you come to town to preach you'll not allow the pastoral part of your work to drop out of sight, as you will be tempted many a time to do.

I know something of the trials of visiting. Your mother keeps nagging at me to go here and go there, but I beg off with the statement that I am too old to stand the strain. Of course, there are places where it's a pleasure to go and a visit does you good, but speaking generally it's hard work, at least for me. People nowadays make such a fuss over you and give you so much of their time that they fairly wear you out. We have got away somehow from the old-fashioned hospitality that made you feel you could do as you pleased in your friend's house. Now you're watched as though you were goin' to steal the spoons. When everything else fails, you're compelled to look over a thousand photographs, more or less, of somebody's aunts and cousins and expected to look pleasant all the time and remember all the names. It's simply too

much for a man of my age. I mention this because I want you to understand that I am in sympathy with the pastor.

It's hard work making pastoral visits—notice that I say visits, not calls. I am in sympathy with the pastor, which means that I understand that his life is not an easy one, but I don't think for a moment he should give up being a pastor. If we of the laity gave up what is hard for us to do, I'm thinking some of you preachers would go hungry to bed many a night. It's not easy to hunt up "quarterage," but some of us have to do it, nevertheless. And so I say, in spite of the many objections which may be mentioned, get into the habit of making pastoral visits.

Set apart your afternoons religiously to this holy work. Never mind how hard it is or how disgusted you become with yourself and others because you happen to think you have made a failure here or there or have wasted your time. There is nothing that is worth while that does not mean toil and sometimes disgust. Even milking a cow has its trials. You know that—eh, Henry? Do you remember when old Brindle kicked the pail of milk over you? You were a white man for once, Henry. But you persevered and at last Brindle had to give in. She knew you had learned how and she let down her milk without any more fussing. Well, that is about the way you'll have to conquer this matter of making pastoral visits.

You'll have to keep right at it, rain or shine, when you feel like and when you don't feel like

it, in winter and summer and all the while. And you must do it, not for the people so much as for Christ. Of course if you do it for Christ you'll do it for the people, but you must have Christ in mind all the time and always remember that it is He that calls you and not the people. Many a time people don't want what they need; often it's the other way. The apostles went out to save the world with Christ always before them and saying as they went, "For Jesus' sake."

You can't be a successful minister of Christ if you don't get free from the fear of man and from the embarrassment of thinking what this one and that is going to say about you and your work. Not that I would have you indifferent to the praise or blame of your fellow-men; not that. You should always be sensitive to what good people think about you and a man who is unpopular can't do much good anywhere. But I would have you nobly independent, as you have a right to be as an ambassador of Christ. Then, if people oppose you, you can go right on, losing no sleep, confident that in the end the very people who oppose you will be your best friends. Be sure of this, that the world—that part of the world for which you need to care—will finally come around to your way of thinking, or if not to your thinking at least to your spirit. After all is said, it is conscience that rules the world.

But I am wandering again. Really, I believe I could make a preacher out of myself, if I should practice wandering from the text a little. I was

writing of pastoral visits. Don't fail to be a pastor. The world could get along without preaching for awhile, if it had a little more mothering. There ain't a man, woman or child in the wide world that don't want sympathy. No matter how high up in the world a man or woman may be, no matter how much of this world's goods they may possess, one thing you may be sure of, every one has trouble. Once I used to hold this as a theory, now I believe it as something I have seen. Many a time I have seen a man or woman pass me with head up as though there was no such thing as trouble in the whole world, when I knew their hearts were pretty nigh breaking with sorrow.

Nowadays, since we've learned so well how to hide our emotions, it is pretty hard for a young fellow like you to believe that every one needs help, but take my word for it and act on what I say and you'll make no mistake. Just assume that everybody needs the help which you, as a minister of Christ, are supposed to bring and go to people prepared to help them in their hour of need. I wouldn't advise you to offer your services too early, as help, like advice that is not asked for, is apt to be returned with thanks, sometimes with kicks. (Let me see, did you ask me for the advice I am now giving you? But, then, this is different. I have given you several things you didn't ask for—particularly when you were a youngster and you didn't obey me—and it wasn't all advice either. Men and women in

trouble soon learn whom they can trust. If you have the right kind of sympathy and with it a good degree of common sense, you'll be called on. And when a man does give you his confidence you'll not be fit for a jail if you betray it. Physicians keep the secrets of their patients. You must keep the secrets of your people.

I hope you'll never go to your people in a professional way. Of course, you're a minister, but every Christian is a minister, as I look at it. You have no right to have airs. You should go to men as a man and a brother and show them that you're a human being with all the humanity that is in any man. Show men that you are alive to all the interests of the world and that you do not think that the kingdom of heaven, when it comes, will exclude business or play or study or any of those things which are necessary to life. But at the same time, I do hope you'll go as a Christian—that is, as a man who is sent by Christ to do a certain work.

I'm sure our ministers ought to pray a good deal more than they do in the homes of the people. Do you know, I really get hungry to hear my minister's voice in prayer in my home? Once when I was sick and our pastor called and talked on many things which he thought I was interested in, but did not ask to pray, it seemed as though my heart would break. Of course, I should have asked him to pray, but I felt that that would be to rob the prayer of half its power. I wanted him to volunteer. But he

didn't and I lost a breath of heaven that day. You must learn to pray in the homes of the people. Don't be afraid of what some people think about it. As I said before, you are not under orders from the people—you are under orders from Christ. And as for what the people think, I can tell you that a good many people think, and they are not all church people by a good deal, that many of you preachers are not half as religious as you ought to be.

When you come to town—if you ever do—you'll find that the men are not at home during the day. Some of them are not at home in the evening, except at mealtime. Really, I don't know just what is to become of the men. What with their societies and clubs and that sort of thing, I fear that only the women and children will be left in the homes. Possibly these will not be left, if more care is not taken with the children to keep them off the street at night; and if the women don't stop going to receptions or whatever they call them. But I'm not going to preach on that subject. I leave that for you and the other preachers to make the best of it you can. You must see the situation, however, and do what you can to make it better.

If you don't find the men at home, then go where they are. Get acquainted with them at their business. I wouldn't join their clubs in order to meet them. You are bound to lose something of your power as a minister if you do that. I don't believe any man was ever won to

Christ by having the minister smoke a cigar with him. I wouldn't stay long in the homes where the men are not present. You know what I mean. Be as wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove. But even in these homes don't think of making a call. Look upon it as a visit. And in the homes of your farmer friends, if you are welcome, learn to stay long enough to make everybody feel that you are in no hurry to get back to your books or to the next place. The farmer is sensitive, too much so, and he will resent anything that seems professional. He wants you to be his friend and you can afford not to stand in his way in this respect. And if you are his friend and he believes it, there is nothing you can't say to him in the pulpit. He may not respond very readily to your appeals for missions, but he will stand by you and possibly in the end may surprise you with a good contribution for the benevolences. Possibly he will remember some one of the causes in his will, though I wouldn't have you depend on that. It is said there is no pocket in a shroud, but there are farmers who do seem to be able to carry away some of their money with them.

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER EIGHT

VIII

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: Your last letter did my old heart good. And so you're going to have a revival, are you? Well, that's right; that's what I wanted to hear, though to tell the truth I wasn't sure whether you'd come to it on your first charge. Nowadays, there's so much said about education and evolution and culture and that sort of thing I didn't know but you'd made up your mind that revivals were out of date, that people wouldn't stand for them any more. I know there's a good deal of that talk here and there.

It was only a few weeks ago I heard a young preacher say that he didn't propose to have revivals on his charge. I asked him what he did propose to have, and he said he intended to train his people to be what they ought to be. I don't wish the young man any bad luck, but I'm really anxious to see what he turns out. Not but what I believe in training. I do believe in it, and I will say that I don't think our preachers do half enough of it. But you can't train people into the new birth. You can't make a Christian out of a sinner by training, at least I have never seen it done and I know a little about the world and about men.

Then, there are people, and preachers among

them, who believe in what the revival means but they don't seem to like the word. Only a little while ago our minister announced that there would be meetings for "deepening the spiritual life." I asked him if that meant a revival and he said he guessed so, and I then inquired why he didn't say so. I don't remember the answer he made, but it was to the effect that people are prejudiced against revivals, just as though they haven't always been prejudiced against them. They were prejudiced against them in Paul's day. The apostle, I remember, was kept pretty busy dodging the stones and other things the Jews threw at him on account of their opposition to revivals. And then in Wesley's day they had fault to find with revivals and Wesley was mobbed several times because he believed that what the people didn't like was just what they needed. But he went right on until the whole of England was in a blaze of revival.

It seems to me that that word is about as good a one as we can get; that is, if we mean something that stirs people up about their sins and persuades them to seek for mercy at the foot of the cross. If, on the other hand, what is wanted is only a fairly respectable kind of an organization that almost any one can belong to without being troubled about his sins, if wealth and fashion are to rule our churches and not spirituality, then, of course, the term revival is not a good word to represent that kind of a situation.

But here is your letter saying, "We have de-

cided to have a revival this winter if it is possible." Thank God, a revival is always possible. Never doubt that. A revival is always possible wherever there is one man or one woman and some one to tell that man or woman about God and duty and sin and Jesus Christ who has atoned for sin. In fact there might be a revival without the preacher; it might be enough for that person to be alone with the memory of his past and with the Holy Spirit to show him the way. If he were in earnest he would find the way to God somehow or other. So, I advise you to cut out that "if it is possible" and just say, "*We are going to have a revival.*" For you can have one even if you are the only one revived, and you know, don't you, whether you need reviving? And you know, too, or ought to know, that God is ready when man is ready to be revived. It's all a matter, as I see it, of the individual soul and God. Just as sure as fire burns and water satisfies thirst does God respond to the soul that seeks Him with the whole heart.

I would suggest, then, that in your preparation for a revival on your charge you begin with the preacher. For two reasons: In the first place, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, that is where the revival is most needed, and, secondly, if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, or, what is about the same thing, if it give no sound at all, who shall prepare himself for the battle?

You may think I'm a little hard on the preacher when I say that he needs the revival himself more

than his people, but I don't think I am. Mind, I don't say that our preachers are not Christians—I don't go as far as that—but I do say that they need reviving. They are altogether too worldly to my way of thinking. They are not as diligent as they ought to be. They don't have the hunger for souls they ought to have. They don't pray in the families and speak to individuals about their spiritual condition half as much as they should. They are too ambitious for themselves. They mix too much in ministerial politics. I have been looking over a book known as the "Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church." It's a very interesting book and as you are fond of books I want to recommend this to you as one of the best you can own and study and follow. Well, in this Discipline I find among certain directions to ministers the following: "You have nothing to do but to save souls; therefore spend and be spent in this work; and go always not only to those who want you, but to those who want you most.

"Observe! it is not your business only to preach so many times and to take care of this or that society, but to save as many as you can; to bring as many sinners as you can to repentance and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord. And remember! A Methodist preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist Discipline! Therefore you will need to exercise all the sense and grace you have." I should say

so. In another place this question is asked, "Do you cheerfully bear your cross, however grievous to nature, as a gift of God and labour to profit thereby?"

If this advice represents what the minister should be and do, and I suppose it does or it wouldn't be in the Discipline, then I ask you, Henry, if I am not right in saying that the revival needs to begin with the minister? Why, if every Methodist preacher would set himself to obey these rules, I don't believe there would be a charge in the country that wouldn't feel the revival fires begin to burn. I tell you, the people are ready to follow their ministers when they are convinced that the ministers mean business and are determined to be men of one work. No doubt about that.

Much can be said, and much is said, about the worldliness of the laity. We are accused of being eager for gain, of loving pleasure more than God, of wanting spellbinding preachers and all that, and while I don't say that there are not some among us who are guilty of these charges, I know that it doesn't represent the majority by a good deal. None of us is as earnest as we ought to be, but the church, as I find it, believes in spirituality. It don't want star preaching, but good plain talk about God and duty and salvation from sin. And so far as I can see, our people are not eager to make money—certainly not so eager as they were in my boyhood—and as for pleasures, I think we are finding most of our pleasures now-

adays in doing something useful. There has been an improvement all along the line, if I'm any judge. And the best test of the truth of what I say is the desire of the people of the church, the great bulk of them I mean, that our preachers be men of God who seek not their own glory, but the good of men—preachers who are in the pulpit because they love the ministry—men who live right lives, pay their debts, are dignified and courteous, generous and tender.

Now, after the revival is well begun—after the preacher on the charge is what he ought to be before God—it don't matter much what sort of methods are used. I have seen a poor plan succeed and very good plans fail. I don't mean to say that it makes no difference whether you use judgment or not. Common sense, sanctified common sense, is as much an evidence of the Spirit's presence as earnestness. And besides common sense I would put patience—not too much of it—and tact, particularly in dealing with cranks who always show up at revival times.

Then, you want to understand and appreciate your place as the regularly appointed—I was going to say the divinely appointed, but I reserve that for the present—the regularly appointed leader of the people. Listen to everybody so far as you have time, but decide on your own judgment and then go ahead and let nothing—storm or fire, man or devil—switch you off the track. Change or stop when you are convinced that God wants you to change or stop, and when you are

in doubt as to the mind of God, then act on your own judgment.

You will have some thought about getting an evangelist, but I advise you not to have one at present. An evangelist of the right sort—all the rest are emissaries of the devil—is worth having when you don't need him. I mean this: When a preacher has had enough experience to prove to himself and the church that he is a successful winner of souls, then he can afford to have the help of an evangelist. Otherwise not. For if he has the evangelist before he has himself done this work, he will not know how to manage the evangelist, and, in the second place, he will always be thinking that the Lord don't own his labours.

No, you must yourself learn this highest of all the arts of the preacher—this art of winning souls. This is what you are called to do; that is, if you are called to the ministry. Think of a man coming to a farmer for work and saying that he knows all about farming and then being obliged to confess that he had never learned to plough. To save souls, that is your first and great work, my son. I hope—yes, I can almost say I believe—you will be a genuine soul-winner, a worthy successor of the apostles and of the early Methodists. Just say you will, and then I'll know for sure. Remember, that in one home, at least, prayer will be going up for you day and night.

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER NINE

IX

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: Ever since your letter came with the news that you were in the midst of a glorious revival my heart has been shouting "Hallelujah" and "Glory to God." Really, if I get much happier I shall have to go out into the barn and let it out a little. You know that I never was much of a shouter, and in these days I am sure I would be regarded as a little off if I indulged myself in saying out loud what I feel in my heart. It might not do even in the barn, for the critters there might think the end of the world had come if I should begin to holler. You know that I have made it a practice to speak quietly to animals, even if I haven't always been gentle with people.

But there, I am wandering from the text again. What I started out to say was that I am the happiest man in the country over your revival. This is what I've been waiting for. I always believed the Lord had called you into the ministry—now I know He has. Once in a while a doubt would creep in, no matter how hard I tried to keep it out—a doubt of your call. It got pretty big when you talked about taking that Hecksatooch subject for your commencement address. But thank God, you were not allowed to drift away

very far. He who called you has been with you all along and He hasn't allowed you to get wrecked on the icebergs. You did drift pretty close to them though and you got chilled once or twice, but I see that I really needn't have feared for you, for those chills only made you steer for a warmer climate. And now you're right where the winds of heaven are filling all your sails. Glory! I've a good mind to run away from home for a few days, for it is rather dead down here just now. Perhaps some of your breeze will strike us before long.

Now that you're right in the midst of your meeting I think I'd better not say much in the way of advice, even though you've been kind enough to ask it. Sometimes I've half believed you were just drawing me out to see what I would say, all the while having your own mind made up as to what you'd do. You've been kind of leading me along, as the lawyers would say. Well, if that's been your purpose you've had a good supply of material to work on; you've known what I thought on those subjects. And, somehow, I think you haven't always got just what you expected. Haven't I surprised you once in a while? Be that as it may, I am sure that now while you're in the midst of your meeting you ought to depend almost entirely upon the Spirit. Do what seems to you right at the time, only be sure that your own heart is right and that you take no advantage of the people. I mean this: In times of revival the leader is apt to push the matter of a decision

to a point that does not meet with the Spirit's favour, certainly not with the calm judgment of men. Don't run ahead of the Spirit in anything and of course don't lag behind. Speak out clearly and boldly and bring sinners to conviction, but don't pull them to the altar by main strength, and I wouldn't vote my congregation much if I were you. Many a sinner is led into insincerity by these efforts of the preachers to commit him to something. He may vote right and not go any farther. He won't be classed with the sinner and he won't take another step nearer the kingdom. And the card-signing I've seen is of a piece with the voting.

No, you must try to have people come clean out, otherwise they will give you trouble later on. And it is my observation that when a sinner does get genuinely convicted and the truth is faithfully pressed home to him day after day and he sees that there is no side-station for him to switch off to, he is pretty sure to decide to get on the main line if he can, and if he does he is pretty apt to go through to the end of the road. It is a great thing to bring a sinner under conviction, but it is a greater thing, in my opinion, to bring him squarely into the kingdom of God, so that he himself, the church, and the world too, will never doubt where he belongs. You can't, of course, expect that an infant will act like a full-grown man, but the infant ought to be an infant, with good sound lungs and a healthy appetite and plenty of muscular vigour and not a half-dead and alive creature that

never does anything more than crawl about and never knows where it is going, thinks it is alive but is not sure, with not enough strength for a healthy cry. May the Lord give us again the old days when the saved sinner made himself known and felt and the church was convinced that he had come clean out from the world !

After you close your protracted meeting you will probably want to get away for a few days' rest. Nothing tires a man more than such services, especially if he has felt that it was a life or death business with him. It is a blessed weariness, but you can't afford to indulge in it too much. The Lord needed rest and so do His followers, and it is nothing but fanaticism to think that because you are a preacher you can violate the laws of God with impunity. So, I would urge you to get off for a little while and run down and see your mother and me—unless there is some one else that you'd like to see very much. I know that my eyesight is failing, Henry, but the old man can see a few things yet, and he knows enough of mathematics to put two and two together when it's necessary.

After you get rested a bit go back to your charge with your mind made up to this, that your work has just about begun. The young converts will need you more than ever young lambs needed their mother. Really, Henry, it almost breaks my heart to see how our preachers allow the young converts to wander around as sheep without a shepherd or to die on the bleak prairies after they

have wandered so far that they think there is no way back. I wish every preacher would keep ever before him the picture of the Lord telling Peter to feed the sheep and to feed the lambs—Christ's sheep and lambs.

I may be too hard, but I don't think I am, when I say that the minister that don't look after the young converts or after the children of the church ain't fit to preach even to empty seats. I don't care how well he preaches or what a good organizer he is ; if he hasn't the disposition to look after his flock, and especially the lambs, he ain't a true follower of the Good Shepherd, who gave His life for the sheep.

It seems to me that our Methodist preachers are great sinners in this respect. I have just been looking up the Discipline and I find printed right in the beginning of the book this language : " The pastor shall organize the baptized children of the church when they shall have reached the age of ten years, or at an earlier age, when it is deemed advisable, into classes, and appoint suitable leaders (male or female), whose duty it shall be to meet them in class once a week and instruct them in the nature, design and obligations of baptism and in the truths of religion necessary to make them wise unto salvation ; to urge them to give regular attendance upon the means of grace ; to advise, exhort and encourage them to an immediate consecration of their hearts and lives to God, and to inquire into the state of their religious experience." I don't profess to know all that is going on in

the church, though I've always been a regular reader of the *Advocates*, but it's a safe guess to say that not one preacher in a hundred, possibly not one in a thousand, is carrying out this order of the Discipline. You preachers complain because the laymen don't do all their duty by the church and, I must confess, we don't, but I do wish the preachers would set us a better example. I wish they would be a little more careful to keep our rules. I wish they would respect the Discipline a little more.

Besides forming your children into classes for religious instruction—which classes you had better have charge of yourself, both for your own and the children's good—I would urge you to seek to bring about a revival of the class-meeting.

Now, don't put me down as an old foggy just because I recommend the class-meeting. I want you always to bear in mind that I don't accept the old just because it is old, but I do believe in what has been tested and found not to be wanting in the time of need. And the class-meeting, if I'm any judge, has been proved and has shown that it can be depended on. There ain't a better school for young Christians in the world than the class-meeting. You ought to know that by your own experience. For what is the class-meeting but the assembling of the church to talk on all the things that pertain to the Christian life?

Experience and age go for something in secular affairs, why shouldn't they in matters of religion? In the class-meeting, if it is what it ought to be,

the young Christian will hear all sides represented. He will know that even experienced Christians have their ups and downs, their good days and their dark and trying days and he will be encouraged to tell his experience and from the telling of it he will get exercise for his spiritual muscles, at least for his tongue, and he will receive the sympathy and advice he needs. And more than all he will learn that the family of God is one family and is not divided up into a lot of little societies and organizations, which serve to multiply offices, and thus give something for the young Christian to do, but help, I am afraid, to develop the spirit of division in the church. Do you think it would help any for the average family to have two or three or half a dozen separate societies or clubs, just so the children and babies might have offices and a greater opportunity of doing something?

I think you will bear me out in saying that in one family that you are pretty well acquainted with there was no need of this, so far as work was concerned anyway, and I think you will say that two offices were enough and that your mother and me held all the offices. Yes, and we do it yet and propose to for a while longer—though to be perfectly truthful I ought to say that my position has been held with a good deal of effort. Your mother sometimes thinks there is but one office and that she holds it. I don't want to seem to find fault with our present church machinery but I am a little troubled about

the multiplication of the societies and clubs. I don't see any gain in spirituality or force from them. I would like a return to the more primitive form of Methodism as better for all concerned—the young folks joining with the old, the old with the young, just as in the well-regulated family; old and young meeting and working and living together in harmony, with the Lord in the midst. I think we will return to that after we have all got tired of this new fashion of organizing clubs for the babies and the children and the young people and the women and the men and the patriarchs.

In the meantime let us work for the restoration of the class-meeting in Methodism for we shall need it or something like it before long. You mark what I say.

Your affectionate father,
ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER TEN

X

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: In answer to your last letter, which was somewhat longer than usual, I will say that your ma and myself have thought over the matter and have concluded that you ought to have a home of your own, and we are thinking of writing to your aunt out in York state, who, you know, never married and is a little along in years, to come west and visit us and then go and make a home for you. She's a fine housekeeper, Henry, and will keep everything spick and span or know the reason why, likes cats, but hates the sight of a dog, and will keep a weather-eye on you. If we don't hear from you by return mail we'll conclude that you are favourable to the plan and will so write your Aunt Rachel.

Now, Henry, what's the use of you and me beatin' round the bush? You want to get married, don't you? Well, why don't you say so? What's the use of you wasting good ink and a lot of fine writing paper—say, Henry, you must have sent to Indianapolis for that paper—and wearing out your fountain pen and spending a whole lot of valuable time to say what you could have said in a single line? Is there anything wrong in a young fellow saying that he is thinking about getting married? Is it wrong to get

married? If so, then your ma and me have made a fearful mistake, for we have been married for so long now that we don't try any more to keep track of the years. And when we got married we got married for keeps. We promised the preacher to love, honour and obey each other till death did us part, or words to that effect. We both knew what was meant and we said yes out loud and, though all the witnesses should die before we do, we know what we said and we know, too, that God heard and that both of us will be judged at the last day for the way we've kept that promise. Of course, we were young when we promised each other what we'd do, but we knew what it meant—we had our eyes open.

You know something of what that marriage has meant to us. You know, better than I can tell you, of its influence upon each of us, your mother and me, and whether, after all is said, the world is better for that marriage than without it. I feel pretty sure what the verdict would be.

We have had our troubles. We have had sickness and misunderstanding once in a while and there were times when conversation lagged in our home and your mother and I spoke mostly through you children. There were times when our relations were strained and the marriage tie felt itself pretty hard put to it, but we can say that during all these years we have been coming closer together until it does seem as though we couldn't get along without each other. At least,

I couldn't get along without your mother and I suspect she couldn't get along without me very well, though she wouldn't tell me that, perhaps. But I think I know how she feels.

And what is true of us is just as true, I suspect, of the large majority of homes in the country. Don't be deceived by what the papers say about divorces. Of course there are too many of those—one divorce is too many according to my notion—but one swallow don't make a summer and a divorce here and there among theatrical people and the fast set don't make marriage a failure. The way I look at it is this: If marriage is a failure, then man is a failure, that's all.

But I imagine you don't need any encouragement on that line. I guess you agree fast enough that marriage is no failure. I wouldn't be surprised if you thought it was about the only success, just at this time. That's the way I looked at it when I was courting your mother. Perhaps it would be better for me to talk a little of the other side.

At your age and with your prospects it would be well for you to remember a few things you are apt to forget. And the first thing is that you are pretty sure to have to live with the woman you make your wife for a good long while; our family is long-lived. Ask yourself whether you are prepared to live with this woman fifty years. That's what it may mean. And while you are thinking on that question be sure to consider such matters as health, tidiness and temper—three

things which will have a lot to do with your success or failure in the married state. It is taken for granted that you love the woman you are going to marry, but this whole matter of love should be looked at from a common-sense basis and not from that of the society novel, especially the novel written by women. Love is all right, but it should have for a foundation health, good temper, mutual forbearance and mutual respect. I think it is possible for a man to love a very unworthy woman and for a woman to love a good-for-nothing man. At least the divorce courts seem to prove that. And on the other hand I wouldn't be surprised if in time, and there was no obstacle, any man could come to love any woman of good temper, kindness and patience. If those qualities are not in evidence all your love will pass away in time and then you will be tolerating each other, and at last will come trouble which, if it doesn't end in the divorce court, will embitter your lives and destroy most of your influence.

Men and women can't live like cats and dogs at home and be saints in public though I know some who have tried to. You can't be quarrelling in your own home and preach patience at the homes of your members. Or, if you do preach, your words will fall to the ground.

Of all men the minister ought to keep his head in this matter of marrying. He can succeed and remain unmarried but success is simply impossible tied to a careless, quarrelsome, meddling

woman. I believe in the minister marrying just because he is a man and he ought to be a man among men in all respects. If it is right for any man to marry it is right for the preacher, unless he can prove—which would be taken for granted in some cases—that he is not a man but belongs to a class that is made up of neither men nor women. The minister ought to share in all that belongs to the race both as a duty and a privilege and also as a means of discipline. He is simply compelled, if he has no home of his own, to admit that he doesn't know the trials and the responsibilities of the home. At the same time he must be on his guard that he doesn't wreck everything by forming a union with one who will in one way or another pull him down. In choosing a wife the minister should, it seems to me, always keep in mind that this woman is not only to be his life companion and the mother of his children but also an associate of his in his spiritual labours. He may add as much again or more to his power or he may be shorn of his power.

You should think at the same time of what you are offering to the woman. She gives up a good deal to be the wife of a man like you. She has a right to look you over just as carefully as you look her over. She wants to succeed probably just as keenly as you do. You can spoil her life just as surely as she can spoil yours. Don't forget that. All that you demand for yourself she has a right to demand for herself. And if you

come to the conclusion that she is giving everything and you are giving next to nothing, it won't be a bad way to begin.

And another thing it would be well to remember, that every man has a certain responsibility for the proper training of his wife, as of course she has for her husband. Every young married couple are about as raw as colts. They are not only high-spirited, but they are foolish and ignorant. As I look back on the time when I led your mother a blushing bride to the altar—I believe that's the way the papers reported it, though to be truthful, I was the one that blushed, and there was no altar, only the preacher holding his little book and looking very solemn—I was about as green as a young sapling and she was as innocent of the duties of a wife and housekeeper as a new-born babe. After a week or two we discovered that we still had stomachs and that floors had to be swept and dishes washed just as though there was no such thing as love and poetry and that sort of thing. And when the cooking went wrong we found that lovers had digestion just the same as other people, and when I pounded my thumb with a hammer driving carpet tacks, I found it hurt just as it used to when I was a boy and, strange as it may seem, I was just as much tempted to say something then as before the wedding day. And then the babies began to appear one after another, and it seemed as though we would never learn anything: we seemed so ignorant of how to do and what to do, and we

are learners still and I suppose always will be. The point I want to make is that the husband and wife should remember all this and not be too hard on each other, but help each other just as children do and not take things too seriously. After all is said what are we, the oldest of us, but children.

As to ministers' wives, I must say that they have disappointed me in almost every instance. They do so much better than one might expect. I remember a remark that was once made to me by a cynical sort of a chap, a hard-headed old bachelor, that represents the situation pretty well as I have observed it. The remark was in the form of a question, "How is it that Methodist preachers manage to get such fine wives?" I gave it up then and I give it up now. I don't know how they succeed in persuading such good-looking, sensible, religious women to go along with them in the long and often trying journey of the itinerancy. Perhaps the love of wandering is in all women as it is in some men. Possibly the women see something romantic, or whatever they call it, in a Methodist minister's life. Whatever the reason is, the fact seems to be pretty clearly demonstrated—another big word for me—that Methodist preachers' wives average up well. I have seen a good many of them during the years of my pilgrimage and with one or two exceptions they have been all that any sensible and reasonable member of the church could expect.

Of course there will always be kickers, as we say; people that cannot be satisfied no matter what they have. Such people look for a saint in every preacher and an angel in his wife. They seem to think that a minister's wife ought to look after her own household, care for all the poor in the neighbourhood, be general hustler for the different women societies and "keep sweet" all the time.

Now, I should say that the less a minister's wife is in evidence in the matter of running things the better. She can do a hundred times more good in a quiet way and have a hundred times more influence if she will let others take the offices. There is such a thing as being the power behind the throne and that is where a minister's wife should get in her work. She ought to be the friend of everybody, as she usually is, represent no clique or faction, dress neatly but not stylishly, give as little advice as possible to the women on how to cook, keep her children looking neat and her house in something like order and be religious all the time.

If you can find a woman that will be something like what I have described you will have success—I was going to say whatever sort of preacher you are. I won't say that for you must help her or she will get discouraged once in a while. But if you know such a woman you had better hurry up and get her or somebody else

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will pick her up. And when you do get her take care of her if you don't want to hear from me.

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER ELEVEN

XI

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: Your mother and I got home all right on Friday afternoon. It wasn't a pleasant journey, but we had a good many pleasant things to think about. We liked your part of the country, though it don't compare with our part of the state. This is the garden spot of creation, according to my notion. But it ain't so bad where you live and the people are real clever. I think you have found a good place to stay in for a while and, if I were you, I'd be in no hurry to get away.

But best of all, better even than the wedding and the fine dinner that followed, is our memory of seeing you and Annie—our Annie as well as yours—standing there with those people among whom you minister and seeing what every one must have seen, that you had found a real help-meet, one that is going to stand by you and help you to stand, instead of one who might pull you down. She's of the right stuff, has a good eye, full of kindness and tenderness, but capable of blazing up, too—which isn't a bad thing, though it has to be watched—a good chin that shows determination and a forehead that convinces you that there is something going on inside. But it is her smile I like best. There is something more

than good nature in it and, of course, something more than a desire to make people think you want to be pleasing. There is real sympathy in that smile. There is love in it—love for men and women as we find them, for I saw that she smiled on one as naturally and easily as upon another.

I know that people have all kinds of tests of character, but I prefer the smile to almost anything else. I believe there was heaven in the smile of Jesus, and I am sure He often smiled upon men and women and children. I am sure He smiled when He took the little ones in His arms and blessed them. Why don't some of the painters show the Lord smiling as well as in His other moods?

Really, Henry, you are doing remarkably well of late. First you have a revival, and I could see when I was at the wedding that it was a genuine one—a true revival shows its real character as well at a wedding as at a prayer-meeting or a funeral—and now you are joined for life to as likely a young woman as I have seen for many a day, almost as good looking and, altogether, almost as fine as was your mother on another wedding day that is as fresh in my memory as though it was but yesterday. Now you take good care of her, or, as I said in my last letter, you'll hear from me. I guess you know what that means.

I was both surprised and sorry to find when at the wedding that you were what I would call

“sore” at the presiding elder, as though he had been rubbing the fur the wrong way. I was surprised, because when a man is about to have made over to him the best of God’s gifts—a noble and loving woman to be his wife—he ought to be in love with all the world. At least everything unpleasant should be forgotten. The world should seem then a pretty decent sort of a place to live in and people only a little below the angels, just because he is going to be presented with one of the angels. That’s the way it seemed to me on a certain day somewhere away back in the fifties, if you count years; but only the other day, if you go by what I feel.

I was sorry you felt as you did, for I am certain you will, if you carefully study the situation and train yourself to charitable judgment, conclude that the presiding elder has some claim on the church. You spoke of his hint that it would be wise for you, if you expected a standing in the conference, to bring up your benevolences and that it seemed to you that he was more anxious about the number of conversions than the quality of them. In regard to the first point is it or isn’t it a fact that a man everywhere is judged by what he does? I mean what he does rather than what he thinks. The world, for instance, is usually willing to allow that most every man has good thoughts but when it comes to make up its mind whether a fellow is worth his keep it judges by what the man does, by the kind of report he brings in. Of course the report must

be a true one. No fellow can go very long with a padded report. I suspect that is about the way it'll be at the day of judgment. Our thoughts, our lives, will be judged by what we've done, the hungry we have fed, the naked we have clothed, the thirsty we have given cups of cold water to. I don't forget about the wedding garment. The wedding garment is all right, but the Lord will be looking pretty carefully at the fellow who wears it to see if he is a genuine worker or only a shirk. I know God hates a shirk. Now the conference is a kind of judgment day for you preachers. The bishop and presiding elders only represent the church and they are asking each of you what you have done with the talents put into your hands. Of course mistakes will be made. I have heard applause for the man with large collections who I knew hadn't done half as good work either for the collections or the charge as some poor fellow from a circuit who got no cheers. Still, in the end, even these mistakes are usually seen and atoned for. Everybody comes into his own at last.

Coming back now to the presiding elders, I want to say that they have my sympathy. As I see it, they do the work of bishops without either the glory or the pay. So far as I can find out, they make the appointments, but no preacher seems to think he owes his advancement to the presiding elder, and, on the other hand, if he don't get what he deserves or what he wants, which means to him the same as what he de-

serves, he is pretty sure to lay the blame on the presiding elder.

So much for the preachers. Most of the laymen lay the blame for everything that's wrong on the elder, but what's good is supposed to come without his help—more often against his will. The one effort of the official brethren seems to be to cut down the apportionment as low as possible, and the district steward seems to be popular in proportion to his success in this direction. The quarterly conference is not popular, the members feeling that it is a waste of time to attend it. One of our young men made the remark after our last conference that he was going to propose that our church buy a phonograph and every three months start it going with the questions: "Are there any appeals?" "Are there any complaints?" "Is the church property properly insured?" "Where shall the next quarterly conference be held?" and so on.

Now, I don't agree with this view of the situation. Once, I confess, I did, but I think I have learned a little of both charity and wisdom, and these help me to see something of the other side. The presiding elders I have known have not been great preachers. Some of them have been a bit prosy, with a tendency to quote a little too liberally from the fathers, and with a liking for yellow-legged chickens above their regard for books, but they were all men of sound character and common sense and loyalty to the church and its institutions. They were not easily fooled.

They didn't make many mistakes, and that is something you'll appreciate more and more the older you get and the more you know of the world. A man may be pardoned for his sins, but for his mistakes there seems to be no atonement.

As things are I really don't see how our church could survive without the presiding elder or some substitute for him. If he does his work he is the most useful and the poorest-paid individual in the church, though I do not mean to say that some of them don't get all they earn, and I won't say that some ought not to be on the superannuate list, but that's only equal to saying that there are a whole lot of folks—preachers, teachers, doctors, business men and others—who could be there and the world be no worse for it. And there are a few young fellows that I know who, if it hadn't been for their friends, would have begun on that list *and stayed there*. I mean nothing personal, of course.

So, I advise you to prepare yourself to go to conference determined to feel no resentment to your elder. Take his suggestions as worthy of your attention and believe that he is disposed to be your friend, as he has every reason to be unless you neglect his advice or turn against him. Don't follow him around and beg favours of him, for that is to spoil everything at the start. Be nobly independent, preserve your self-respect and at the same time be respectful to everybody else, even to those whom the Lord and the Church

have set over you. Nobody gains anything in this world by fault-finding, not even preachers.

Another thing I have had in mind to say, and that is about your going to conference and your conduct while there. I have attended several conferences during my life and I must say that I am not impressed with the spirit that seems to control them. There is too much of the material and worldly and not nearly enough of the spiritual in them. I have often wondered, as I have listened to the reports and debates, what a stranger to this planet and to our religion would think it was all about. I am sure that he wouldn't think the preachers' chief business was to spread scriptural holiness over the lands—certainly not if he attended the devotional meeting and noticed the small number in attendance and then looked in at the committee-rooms and listened to the conversation going on all about him. Of course there is need of reports and there is a business of the church that must be attended to, but one would naturally think that the chief business of the conference would receive some attention. I should say that that early devotional meeting needed to be born again and I am sure that a whole day given to the preachers to report on the spiritual condition of their charges would not be time wasted.

And I am sure that the preachers should be more careful of their conversation, especially when it concerns their brother's reputation. Referring to the Discipline again, under the subject

of "Deportment at the conference," I read: "It is desired that all things be considered on these occasions as in the immediate presence of God. . . . In order, therefore, that we may best improve our time at the conferences: 1. While we are conversing let us have an especial care to set God always before us. 2. In the intermediate hours let us redeem all the time we can for private exercises. 3. Therein let us give ourselves to prayer for one another and for a blessing on our labour." That is Methodism, Henry, or it wouldn't be in the Discipline, and I hope you will lay it to heart and go to the conference with your reports all ready, every cent of money accounted for and prepared to help as many of your brethren as possible by your prayers and conversation and Christian spirit.

Remember that the conference is just as good a place as any in the world to display the Christian graces, especially those of humility, charity and forbearance, and that you have no business to say there what you would not say anywhere or to be any less pious than in your own pulpit. I trust, too, that you are expecting to be returned to your present charge or to go anywhere else without whining, feeling assured that no place is too humble to warrant your best efforts. Love to Annie.

Your affectionate father,
ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER TWELVE

XII

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: I have just received your note written from conference in which you say that you fear you may be removed from your present appointment and sent to Weepin' Willow circuit, and that you think I ought to come down and see the bishop and presiding elder and, as it were, read the riot act to them.

Evidently, Henry, you didn't thoroughly prepare yourself for conference, as I urged you to do in my last letter. I feared something of this kind, though for good reasons I didn't come out flat-footed and say all that was in my mind. But I knew you would be tempted, and so I gave you some good general advice and referred you to the Discipline, all of which, I thought, you being an Allen, would be enough to put you on your guard against the dangers that beset young ministers when they go up to conference. Henry, when you come to preach from a well-known text tell your congregation that it *does not* read, "Be wise as doves and harmless as serpents." And like all your sermons preach this one to yourself first.

You are prepared now, I think, to hear me say that I cannot for a moment entertain your proposition that I should go down and see the bishop.

That would be wrong; worse, perhaps, than wrong, it would be a mistake. Some things cannot be atoned for, and among these are the blunders which good people make that put themselves and their friends in a wrong light, and destroy their influence with their fellow men, sometimes for a lifetime. Other mistakes are due to the misunderstanding of a brother, on account of gossip, and a man's life is practically ruined. Ministers, I regret to say, are peculiarly liable to make, and suffer from, these mistakes. They seem to me, at times, to act entirely on impulse as children do, just as though this wasn't a world governed by law. They seem to act sometimes as if they were not going to be visited by the consequences of their acts as other people are. They go on preaching from the text, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap," but they appear to mean not every man, but every man except the preacher. I wish some one would explain this peculiarity. Is it true that society is made up of men, women and ministers, or what is the explanation?

When you wrote me to come and see the bishop in your behalf I am charitable enough to believe you hadn't thought of the consequences of such a visit. You were a little excited and, maybe, scared. Some one of these ministerial gossips—a bad lot—had told you or had told some one else who told you that you were down for Hardscrabble circuit. Instead of keeping your head, as you might have done if you had

prayed enough, you up and wrote to me to come down and save you.

Suppose I should have taken the next train and run in upon you about the middle of your session, what would have been the result—or, rather, I should say, the results? I wouldn't have taken the first step from the station before it would have gone all over the conference that old man Allen had come to boost his son into a good place or to keep him from going to Hardscrabble where he belongs. How would that affect things? Well, if you were advanced there would be prejudice aroused right then and there against you, against me, against the presiding elder, against the bishop, against the episcopacy, the itinerancy, the Methodist church, all the churches, Christianity and I don't know what else. Some preachers have such memories—I was going to say such prejudices, but I forbear. And if you should not be advanced or, worse, should be set down a peg, then it would be understood that "old man Allen" and his precious son had no influence with the bishop, and so forth. I think, perhaps, we might get over talk like that, in time, but we would never get over—I know I would not, and I know you ought not to get over—the feeling of shame for trying to win a place in the church by anything except our character and work and for doubting either the church or God's providential care.

I know what we might say in the way of defence to men, but I am thinking of what we must

admit to ourselves when on our knees before God. And when I am there it don't help me a bit, Henry, to hear the devil say that other people do these things. Other people crucified Christ. That some ministers consent to use political methods to advance themselves, don't make it right for me to use my influence to put you where the judgment of those who have to make your appointment think you do not belong or where it must, in the nature of the case, do an injustice to somebody else. I won't do it. When I come to the conclusion that to have a place for my son or any other minister, I must humiliate myself and them, or when I lose confidence in the appointing power in our church, then it will be time to seek a change in the method of making appointments or, at least, a change of men.

But I don't think we have come to that yet. I believe our bishops are disposed to do the right thing by the preachers—when they are let alone and I, for one, propose to let them alone. Of course, if I have any business with them or they with me, I will meet them any time, anywhere, and talk with them, man to man, until the business is settled one way or another. That is the course you and every other minister should follow. If you have anything to ask of a bishop, or any complaint to make, go to him in broad daylight and tell him what is in your heart; don't get a third person to speak for you.

You say in your letter that you don't think it is quite a fair return for your year's labour to be

taken up from your present place, where you are contented and the people are satisfied with you, and sent to the poorest place in the conference. That is probably true. It was a poor return for such a service as Christ rendered, to be hung on a cross, but that is the way the word has of rewarding its servants.

You probably think the church should not be ruled by worldly methods. True enough! Perhaps you will remember, you being something of a scholar, how the church of St. Paul's day rewarded that apostle. It gave him a church trial, did it not, for preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. How was it in Martin Luther's case or in John Wesley's? We have made a good deal of improvement since those days. We don't persecute men nowadays for preaching the gospel—not in civilized countries—but neither the world nor the church has yet learned how to reward its servants. But there is one who does reward the man who does his duty. It is Christ. And whoever looks to Him alone for reward will never be disappointed.

Perhaps you think I know only about the theory. Don't make that mistake. We laymen have our trials, too.

Many a time I have gone to church week after week, year after year, in some cases, and have not received what seemed to me a single new truth or a fresh putting of an old one from the pulpit, and I am not a critic and I am fond of sermons. And I have gone to official board meet-

ings when I was pretty tired and threshed over the old straw again and again until midnight. And for many years I have been criticised because I was trying to run the church, that I had grown cold, that I paid more than I needed to so as to control things, that I was stingy, that I talked too much, that I didn't talk enough, that I was too thick with the preacher, that I gave him the cold shoulder, and much more of the same sort. Many's the time I have gone home sick at heart, tempted to ask if it paid.

Of course it didn't pay if man's reward is all that is to be taken into account. But when upon my knees I looked up into the face of the Crucified, I knew it did pay. And, as I see it now, I wish I had given twice as much of my strength and time to the work. Oh, how it does pay! In fact, nothing else pays, as I look at it.

And as for place, I do believe that every man gets the place that belongs to him sooner or later. Even the world, to say nothing of the church, is looking for men who are able to do its work. Sometimes it has work it wants done that no self-respecting man will do. But for the most part its work is all right and it will pay the man who can do it best, whatever his name is or whatever he believes about this or that, including religion. The church wants men who have right beliefs and good hearts, but it asks for something more; it asks for men who have ability and in the end the man who can do the work is the man who is sought for.

For a while the man who speaks for himself or who has some one else to speak for him, seems to be the man who succeeds, but the race is to the fellow who passes the mark first. I have heard plenty of complaints from men—ministers and others—that they were kept down, that enemies were on their trail, that “influence” counted for more than worth. Don’t you believe that. These things may seem to prevent a man’s success and for a time may really stand in his way, but at the last it is the genuine thing—ability, worth—that succeeds. Of course, if you believed everybody’s story of himself you would have to believe that the vagabond is what he is because he is too good to associate with common folks. No man is able to pass finally on his own merits. There are about fifty thousand splendid pulpit orators in this country, if you are to judge either by what every preacher thinks of himself or what his friends say. I never knew a preacher so poor that somebody didn’t say he was a pulpit orator, or words to that effect.

I hope nothing I have said will discourage you. I believe you are going to succeed—in time. But don’t be in a hurry. The world wasn’t made in one day. Be content with what you have and, anyway, look contented. Don’t be disturbed by every rumour you hear. They can’t put you off the earth, or, if they do, there’s the universe. Look in the face of everything that meets you and assure your heart that God is always on the side of the man who won’t be

scared. Perhaps you'll find when the appointments are read that you are called to go up higher. Sometimes preachers are disappointed that way—not often. Love to Annie. What man could be afraid with her by his side?

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER THIRTEEN

XIII

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: I can hardly say that your telegram announcing your appointment to a city charge was much of a surprise. I don't know why I felt as I did but I seemed to be impressed with the probability of it, though to tell the truth I was not led to shout over it. I did not think it was the best thing for you or for the church just at this time. I wanted you to have a little more experience in the country before coming to the city. And after the telegram came, and then your appointment appeared in the papers, I must confess I felt just a little depressed. Perhaps it was lack of faith on my part and perhaps I ought not to be telling you this, but I really wish the bishop had seen fit to send you back for at least another year to the circuit where the people wanted you and where I believe you would have a much better year than your last. But I will not complain of the ways of Providence or criticise the bishop. Now that I know that neither of us tried to manage your appointment I feel that we have the right to think that God's blessing will be upon it. One thing I am sure of, that if you are faithful and earnest and wise you can redeem any possible mistake from failure. Mind, I don't say it was a mistake.

Your letter that has just come to hand seems to show that the matter was canvassed pretty thoroughly and that the bishop had his eyes open when he sent you to your new field. He knew of your inexperience and he probably knew something of the demands of the charge and if there has been a mistake you can feel that there was at least an honest effort made to do what was best.

I do not profess to know just the character of the charge to which you have been sent. I have heard a good deal about it in one way or another, but I've learned to discount rumour about fifty or seventy-five per cent., and then I generally subtract about half of what is left as being non-essential. What remains, if well considered, will help to throw real light upon the subject. I am not sure that I know just what are the essential facts about your church, but I should judge that it presents a pretty hard problem. One thing seems to be pretty clear, that it has been running down for a good while. I remember when it was one of the leading churches in the conference. It used to have the leading preachers. It gave a good deal of missionary money, and in one way or another made itself felt in Methodism far and wide. But that was some time ago. For several years even its own members have felt that the church was gradually going down and there has been a good deal said as to the causes. Quite a number of the older members have said, so I have been told, that it

was due to lack of spirituality. Others have said that the preaching was the whole trouble. Still others have taken the ground that success was impossible because the people had moved away, and the only thing for the church to do was to move to a more respectable neighbourhood. I find similar statements are being used in a good many places to account for the poor success, or in some cases, for the failure of certain city churches. You'll find, Henry, as you get older, if you haven't found already, that for every failure there is always an excuse and a reason, and in nine cases out of ten—I was going to say in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred—the excuse is not the reason. It is always easy to give an excuse, but to give a reason means work by somebody to find out exact conditions and something of heroism to put the finger on the sore spot. It is always easier to tell a man he has a boil than a cancer, or a cold than the consumption, and it is easier to believe our trouble is due to somebody else's mistake than our own.

In order that I may not weary you by too much talk I want to say right in the beginning that wherever a church fails to grow, so long as there are people to be reached, the failure is due to the members of the church and the preacher getting away from Methodism. You will wonder, perhaps—though you shouldn't by this time—why I don't say Christianity instead of Methodism. Just because Methodism *is* Christianity. If it wasn't I wouldn't have anything to do with

it. Mind, I don't say that other denominations are not Christian—not by a good deal. But Methodism in its spirit—I don't mean this or that form—seems to me to be a revival of genuine Christianity—the Christianity of Paul and Peter and John, yes, and of Christ. For what is Methodism if it ain't the faith that every one may be a child of God and know it—know it without going through any kind of ritual performance, without joining any church; yes, without being told so by any man or set of men? That is Methodism as I understand it. I know that we have a good deal more that we preach, but everything grows out of that and anybody who believes that is a Methodist in spirit.

And all our troubles grow out of the neglect of Methodism. Does any one mean to say that a church that believes in this great doctrine of Methodism won't succeed anywhere where there are people? If there is such a one I would like to see him—no, I wouldn't either, for I might say more than I ought to.

Take the church to which you have been appointed. I don't know just what all its conditions are and I don't need to know them, so far as that is concerned. It is enough to know that it has been failing to do the work of a church, and that not because there are no people there—for the neighbourhood, I am told, has more people in it than it ever had. Why, then, are not the people reached and saved? Just because the members of the church, in which I include the

preachers, have not been Methodists. They have backslidden, if they ever were Methodists. Don't tell me that a church that really believes—BELIEVES, mind you—this fundamental truth of Methodism will decline so long as there are people to be saved. Such a church may call itself Methodist. It may have prayer-meetings and class-meetings and holiness-meetings and it may talk a good deal about a free gospel and make a good deal of noise and yet not be a Methodist church. For when the spirit is gone everything is gone. I never cared much for ritual performances, for I have the feeling that people generally are apt to forget what the ritual stands for, but I'd rather have an orderly and beautiful ritual any day than mere noise that stands for nothing but lung power.

Methodism stands for salvation, full and free and joyous—the knowledge of sins forgiven and an overcoming life. It is not bound to any particular order or custom, though it does believe in orderliness, and it proposes to see to it that every man, woman and child in the wide world shall hear and accept the gospel, as it knows that every one can accept it if he will. Now, take a company of people who believe this—real Methodists—and set them down anywhere, in the country or the city, in Indianapolis or Hongkong or anywhere else, and what will happen? Why, some of those people must be converted, that's all there is about it.

And so I say that, wherever in our cities there

are churches that have been running down hill, while there have been people around them, it is as clear as noonday that Methodism has gone, whatever else has been left. The church has been living on its past, or it is depending on star preaching, which never saved a soul yet and never will, or it has become a cold-storage plant, or it is too expensively run, or the members are ashamed to mix with the people of the community. Some one of all these things is true or possibly all of them are, and when any one of them, or a similar charge, can be brought against a church, it means that it is no longer a Methodist church, whatever else it is—and it ain't a Christian church either. I don't say there are no Christians in such a church, not by a long shot. There may be some of the best Christians in the world in it, but they have learned to keep pretty mum or else they are in hot water most of the time.

As I said before, I don't know just what is the trouble with the church the bishop has seen fit to send you to, but I wouldn't be a bit surprised to hear that I have described it in some of my remarks. Possibly it has been more unfortunate than willfully wrong. It may have got into its present state through the fault of people who are not now connected with it. It is often the case that those who are responsible for trouble take to their heels as soon as they see their policy won't work.

But it is of no importance who is to blame or

what are the exact reasons for the present state of the church, it is your business to see just what that state is as soon as you can and then go to work with your sleeves rolled up and with a determination to win or die in the attempt. You won't die.

The first thing you will need to do will be to make Methodists—real John Wesley Methodists—of the members. You won't do that in a week or a month or a year, and if you have some people who brag a good deal about what good Methodists they are and how backslidden everybody is who don't talk as they do, why it will take a very long time to do the work. And you'll have to be patient, I don't mean lazy, and you'll have to restrain your tongue on all occasions except in the pulpit, when the Lord has given you a message which you must deliver or die. Even then let no one have any excuse for thinking that you care more for a sharp word than for a true one.

The official board will be a burden to you, no doubt of that. You will find the man there who has made all the appointments for ten years—according to his tell—the man or men who have the most of the money and the man who has quietly decided the church's policy. Be careful what you say at your first meeting and what you promise. Announce no policy you are going to follow or what you are going to do. Listen and remember. And in your work don't be in a hurry to improve on the plans of the man you follow.

Make changes very carefully and slowly and be sure when you make them that they are what you are going to stand by.

No matter how you feel, never sound a discouraged note—that would be to fail right then and there. And you're not going to fail, you know. You are sent to that charge to succeed and back of you is the church and back of the church is Christ and He has promised to stand by His ministers everywhere and always, no matter what their trouble or difficulty is. Don't cross any bridges until you come to them, then walk right over them with your head up and your eyes on the other side and if there ain't any bridge, why, off with your coat and shoes and take to the water. Never mind if you can't swim; you'll find no rivers on the journey on which you've started too deep to wade. No, you'll not need to be afraid for somehow I am assured that you are going to have success. I seem to feel it in my bones.

Your affectionate and confident father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER FOURTEEN

XIV

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: I've just received a copy of the *Daily Howler* from your town with a picture in it that has some resemblance to a sewing-machine agent that recently struck our place. I had hard work to get rid of him and when that paper came I thought, "Well, there are some people you simply can't get shut of; if you turn them out of your house they'll stand in the yard, and if you run them off the yard they'll send their pictures to you."

I was about to carry the paper to your mother in the kitchen when I happened to look below the picture and saw the following: "Rev. Henry R. Allen, A. B., B. D., the new pastor of the Wesley Park Methodist Episcopal church." I stopped right where I was. That is, I tried to stop where I was, but the shock was too great and, after drawing a few deep breaths, I had to sit down.

Henry, you must be more careful. I am a pretty rugged man for my age, but there are some things that are almost too much for me. The surprise is too great.

But the picture is not all, nor your name with all those capital letters after it. The editor seems to have thought that the world wanted your his-

tory. I am glad to see that you are not ashamed of your birthplace or of your age, or even of your parents, and it is certainly interesting for the world to know that you went to the public schools and your father and mother can never quite repay all concerned for the statement that you were "born of poor but honest parents, who, like Cincinnatus, believed in the soil and did not despise the plow and who taught their children to respect the agriculturist." Though I was not aware that Cincinnati cared anything particularly for "the soil," it is true that we have never despised the plow and, I guess, we were "poor but honest." But I must deny that we ever taught our children to respect the agriculturist, whoever he is. We did teach our children to respect farmers and other people, but I don't see anything in that worth taking the time to print.

What is the meaning of the statement that "Mr. Allen is now a retired farmer and capitalist of the neighbouring city of Tippecanoe"? Henry, that's what I call yellow journalism. In the first place I am not retired. Secondly, I am not a retired farmer and, in the third place, I am not a capitalist, at least, if I understand what that means. I suppose your mother and me will manage somehow to scrape through the rest of our lives, but I have no money to loan and I don't propose to give away any on libraries to supply blood and thunder novels and love stories to people who had better be reading their Bibles. And

I don't expect my children will have much to squander.

The newspaper says further that "Dr. Allen was a brilliant student in college and graduated with high honours, since which time he has occupied the pulpit, his preaching reminding the people of Indiana of the late lamented Henry Ward Beecher." "Dr. Allen" is what our neighbour's boy, who uses the language of the street, would call "the limit." Yes, that's it—*the limit*. Henry, are you a doctor? If you are you'd better keep quiet about it. Were you a "brilliant student"? Did you graduate with "high honours"? Is it true that your preaching has reminded the people of Indiana of Henry Ward Beecher?

Now I want to say that when I read such tommy-rot as that I was mad all the way through. I don't think the sun went down on my wrath and I don't believe I would have hurt any one, but I know, if I'd had the opportunity, I'd have given the person responsible for that a piece of my mind. I don't think you were responsible for the stuff; if I thought you were I'd feel like disowning you. A man can be forgiven for lying, but putting out such sentimental rot as that seems almost beyond forgiveness. I hope you are as disgusted as I am. If you say so I am for suing the paper for libel.

While I acquit you of responsibility for the write-up, I cannot see how you can excuse yourself for the photograph and the capital letters.

Mind, I don't say that I think it's a crime for a man to have his picture printed or to have a lot of letters after his name, even though they don't mean anything. What I object to is the worldliness of it all. Some of you preachers are so inconsistent. You preach with great zeal against the young people going to dances, playing cards and that sort of thing, because it is *so worldly*, and then you imitate the world at its worst in proclaiming your own greatness, or encouraging others to do it, trampling under foot the Master's saying about humility and the duty of His followers humbling themselves that they may be exalted. It seems peculiar to me to hear the General Rules read by a minister in a good, round voice, warning the members of the church not to wear gold and costly array, and then to discover that he signs his name on the hotel register, as "*Mr. Blank.*" I know it is the custom for men to have their degrees printed after their names—that is, if they've got the degrees, though some, I suspect, couldn't or wouldn't tell where they got them—but for the life of me I can't see any sense or reason in it either for ministers, college professors or other people. Ain't it a sort of self-puffery which amounts to this: "Look at me; I don't belong to the common herd. I know more than other people, for see my sign. I am John Smith, A. B. C. D., etc."

There are preachers I have met in my time who carried a "D. D." after their names who, if they wanted to advertise just what they were, would

have substituted for the "D.D." the letters "B.C.," which I understand to mean "Before Christ." Their preaching, their whole thought and attitude to things, seemed to me to go back to the times before our Saviour.

I do believe the time will come when men won't think it necessary to advertise themselves as bachelors and doctors and masters and professors of this and that, but will be satisfied to stand with their fellow men to be judged for what they are. Certainly that will be true when Christianity prevails—the Christianity of Jesus and Paul and Luther and Wesley. How cheap would Paul appear to have a "D.D." after his name. How grandly do the names Martin Luther and John Wesley stand out beside those of "Dr." Luther and "Dr." Wesley! Who says "Dr. Moody," or even "Dr. Beecher"? These men were too big for such things. If you are going to remind the world of Henry Ward Beecher, the first thing to do, in my opinion, is to drop everything in the way of mere appearance and be yourself, perfectly honest and sincere, with a consuming desire to make all men the true children of God. That is the way Beecher affected me when I heard him. I don't know what he became after he left Indiana.

There is another thing I am reminded of by the publication of your picture and biography, and that is the danger the church and ministry are under by too much advertising.

I know, of course, that this is the day of

booms and that there have been many fortunes built up on advertisements alone. To prove that, all we have to do is to refer to the people who have got rich on patent medicines. I have heard, too often to forget, that he that bloweth not his own horn, verily it shall not be blowed. I remember all that, and yet I take the ground that the enduring things, the things that are going to stand forever, don't need advertising. Understand, I mean by advertising not urging or recommending with all our might what we honestly believe to be true—that sort of advertising is all right; it is something we must have—but the bargain-counter sort of thing that many preachers and churches indulge in—pictures, signs, the before-and-after-taking sort of quackery that disgusts all sensible and unworldly people.

I always have a peculiar feeling come over me when I meet a person giving out tracts in a street-car or railway train or see on the railroad bridge the words: "Where will you spend eternity?" Once I saw on the walls of one of those pious restaurants that have passages from the Bible framed and hung around the room the words: "Prepare to meet thy God." I never ate there again.

Well, what I want to come at is this, that no church was ever built up by the newspapers and no preacher helps himself or his cause, in the estimation of the thinking public, by having his name often in print. I don't want you to think that I don't value the press. It is a great

institution and has tremendous influence, but let me tell you that the men who are moving the world are not the men whose names we see in the papers every day, and the preachers who are doing the work of the church most effectually are not those who are reporting their doings every week in the secular or even the church papers. Let us have, by all means, whatever will encourage Christians to believe the kingdom of heaven is coming or will frighten the devil; but I hold that modesty has still a place in the church and that it don't become a servant of the Lord to brag about his own doings. It is still the humble who are exalted of God, and when God exalts a man the world is not going to pull him down very soon—ain't going to because it can't. And there are plenty of men in the world, men that preachers would be apt to count as worldly, who have come to see the value of appearing to be modest even if they ain't so at heart. Take it in politics. The real politicians, the men who do things, not the stool-pigeons who seem to be doing everything, are careful not to advertise either their plans or themselves. They don't propose to give away their plans and they won't cheapen themselves by publicity. It's the same way with the big merchants—the cheap Johns make all the noise.

After all is said, it's the genuine stuff that finally wins the people. I know it is said that the American people like to be humbugged. That is not true, though it is true that Americans

are a good deal like children, they have short memories, they don't take time to reason out a proposition and they allow their curiosity to influence them altogether too much. And yet even Americans are won finally by what is true and abiding. The doctor that cures his patients will not want for customers, though the quack spends his thousands for advertising. And the church that does the Master's work, does the work and not merely preaches about it, will be known and appreciated in time.

On a cold day people manage to find a place to get warm—if there is such a place. And wherever there is a church in which the Master Himself likes to stay, a church where there is warmth for the heart and food for the soul, there you may be sure the people will sooner or later come. Bees don't swarm round rotten wood or an icehouse. White clover and basswood never seem to need an advance agent to tell the bees to come. And no church that has the Master's love for souls will need an advance agent or somebody to blow a trumpet for it. It will let its light shine, of course, but it will be for God's glory, not its own, and it will sound a trumpet, but it will be for the rallying of the army, not for dress-parade.

When I speak as I do about advertising you will not imagine, I hope, that I discount anything that will help to make the church as effective as possible for the work it has in hand. Because a man is a good surgeon is no reason why he

should try to cut a man's leg off with a hatchet and a cross-cut saw. He will, just because he is a skillful man, make use of the best tools. He will have no tools for show—a thing that always reveals the quack—but he will have the best. And the true church will have the best tools to do its work, no doubt of that. Have an eye, Henry, to the ventilation of your church—poor ventilation is one of the things that causes many churches to go under the hammer. Is your music good, by which I mean, not the operatic sort, which will kill any church, nor the tum-ti-tum variety that turns religion into sentimentalism, but what is devotional, religious and uplifting. Do you keep your church building clean and in good repair? Are your pews easy to sit in?—I don't mean to sleep in. These suggestions will indicate what I mean by having proper tools and appliances. If you haven't them, get them right away and then keep them brightened up; not by sand-papering, but by use. And with God's blessing you'll succeed and you'll be known too, known, I mean, as much as is good for you or the cause.

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER FIFTEEN

XV

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: I was quite prepared to hear that you were not responsible for that biography which appeared in the *Daily Howler* of your city, though I did not expect quite so vigorous a denial. When I wrote you about it I stated, as you will recall, that I didn't think you could have said those things about yourself. But you must have given the editor or whoever was responsible for what appeared the facts about your birth and attendance at college and the seminary and you probably handed him the alphabet to use after your name. With so much in hand the reporter naturally concluded that you wanted the rest—the flattery. That is to say, the reporter took it for granted that ministers expect flattery just as men of the world—foolish men of the world, I mean—expect it. And ain't that fact a terrible criticism on the ministry? Here is a man who professes to preach the doctrines of the meek and lowly Nazarene, professes to be a disciple of that same lowly one, and the newspaper fellow assumes, as a matter of course, that he will be pleased with a lot of stuff about being like Beecher. I don't say but that the reporter mistook his man when he struck you—I do hope he did—but what a reflection is his belief of what you would like on the body of the ministry.

You say that you have about concluded that what is needed in your new field—parish you call it—is an institutional church and that you have about made up your mind to propose it to your board at its next meeting. And you have sent me an essay on the subject by some one in the East who writes as if he knew just what all our troubles are and just how to cure them and his conclusion seems to be that, on the whole, what we need is more machinery. I quote a few of his sentences :

“The old-fashioned church is dead and cannot be resurrected.” “The day of revivals is over.” “People cannot be coaxed to a mourners’ bench in this age.” “We do not need prayer so much as we need work.” “The church of the future must have clubs for the young, a gymnasium and bowling-alley, a reading-room and bath-tubs for the men, a cooking-school and sewing-circle for the girls and women.” “The church must be open all the time, not one day in seven.”

So that is what you call an institutional church, is it, Henry? Well, for my part, I cannot grow enthusiastic over it. In the first place, I don’t like the name. It hasn’t a good sound. It has something of the factory, a little of the “rah, rah” business of the college and a hint of the department-store in it. No, I don’t like the name. Then, I must say, that if this party whose article you sent me represents the institutional church I haven’t much use for him or his idea.

I suppose I am prejudiced ; we are all more of

less prejudiced about something. But really you couldn't expect me to feel just right towards a man who says, as though wisdom was going to die with him, that the old-fashioned church is dead and cannot be resurrected and that the day of revivals is over and that we need more work than prayer. I don't like any one to talk that way and somehow I feel that this institutional fellow is talking to me, for I believe in the old-fashioned church and in old-fashioned revivals and in prayer—yes, in prayer ten thousand times more than in any amount of work without prayer.

And I never can believe that bath-tubs can save men, though I admit they might help the looks of some people. But as to saving their souls, that's another matter. Why, we have men in our town who have all of those things and more than they know what to do with and they're the most hardened sinners we've got. Perhaps you will remember a certain party by the name of Dives who fared sumptuously every day—had all he could eat and wear and pleasures too numerous to mention, and under his table there crawled a beggar by the name of Lazarus who ate of the rich man's crumbs while the dogs licked his sores. Do you remember what became of those two men? Would your bath-tubs and bowling-alleys and all that help a man like Dives?

No, Henry, what such a man needs is a mourners' bench and the power of God to turn him inside out and make a new man of him. A man like Dives needs a Paul to talk in very plain

English of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come. He should be told that it ain't baths he needs for the body so much as the water of life to wash clean his foul heart. Perhaps not in just that language, though I don't see but it's just as polite as the prophets, and even Jesus Himself, used when it was necessary, and it seemed to be necessary. And when our ministers begin to talk right at men in plain English—of course, with the right spirit—then we'll begin to see that revivals are not out of date. Henry, when a man talks about revivals being out of date I know just where to put him. Either he don't know what he's talking about or he's an infidel in disguise.

I hardly know what the writer means by the old-fashioned church. If he means a church that is satisfied with sermons and a meeting or two a week; a church that is run by a little clique of people who think they are better and wiser than the rest of the world and whose idea of preaching the gospel is to set a man in a pulpit made of black walnut elevated as high as possible above the heads of the people, and have him read an essay on "Shall we know each other there?" and at the same time caring nothing for knowing men and women here, why, then, I agree that that kind of a church ought to die, and I think I would like to help bury it so deep that even Gabriel wouldn't waken it. But I don't call that an old-fashioned church; I don't call it a church at all. It ain't even a social club or a secret society. I guess you might call it an ice trust.

The real old-fashioned church is the church of the apostles, and there ain't a church worthy the name to-day that hasn't the spirit of those early Christians. So far as I can find out, that early church didn't have much of an organization and it wasn't strong on church buildings, but it did have a spirit and power that made it invincible.

The chief trouble with our churches nowadays is that there is so little power in them. Men and women do not recognize anything particularly supernatural about or in them. The masses do not seem to feel that God is speaking to them through the church as they did at other times and as they will again, I believe, whenever the ministry is convinced that the one thing needed is the presence of God in the church and in the individual—a new baptism of the Holy Spirit. That is the first thing, to make the presence of God felt in the church itself. That will mean that the minister must himself be what he asks others to be. He should go into his pulpit as a man who has seen the face of God. He should be reverent in his conducting of public worship and he should insist on having his choir and everybody that has any part in the worship reverent. The very atmosphere should make men feel that God is in His holy temple. That is the great weakness of the church, that in its worship, in the conduct of the members in and outside the church there is not produced a religious feeling. I have been in churches with a so-called stately worship and I have met with those who boast of their sim-

plicity and I have missed the devout and worshipful atmosphere. There seems to be lacking a conviction on the part of minister and people of the presence of God. Do you seek for that as you would for life itself and gradually men will be drawn to the church—not all men, for only they that hear Christ's voice will follow Him, but there are a good many more of these than the preachers imagine.

There are many who do not themselves believe they belong to the Saviour that would know it if He was but revealed to them as He is. Now, a genuine revival, whatever may be its minor defects, does produce this atmosphere, and no church can grow that does not seek to keep it, and it can be kept only by minister, official board, choir and people making up their minds to devote themselves to God, body, soul and spirit.

This is the first thing. Next to that in importance, as I see it, is the religious training of our children—not the training of their minds nor of their bodies, all of which has its value, but their religious training. That was largely accomplished, when I was a boy, by the home; but nowadays the home is hardly religious and the church and the pastor must work together to revive home religion, and where it don't exist and can't be developed, then to furnish the best substitute for it by work that the pastor shall have his hand on even more directly than he has on the Sunday-school and the young people's societies. And the third thing that every church

should be known for is a whole-hearted evangelism—the saving of men and women who have wandered away. And that evangelism must be done in no machine way or by this or that organization. The less organization you have the better. Many a church is now using up all its energy in making its wheels go round, and they don't do that without a good many hot boxes.

You ask me if I don't think the church ought to do more for the bodies of men than it is doing? That depends. If you have a Lazarus who has to depend on the crumbs from some rich man's table it might be all right to help him to a free bath, but be sure you don't allow Dives to get away from his responsibility. Dives' only hope is Lazarus.

This whole question of help is a very complicated matter. I know I have helped many a man nearer the poor-house by giving him things, when I should have taken more pains to help him to help himself. The church should help the poor to get bath-tubs and books for themselves. It should help the town to provide accommodation and proper teachers for the children. That is better than doing the work itself, even if it could. Its one business, as I see it, is to make Christians of as many as it can—Christians that will make the home and the school and the city hall and the state and the whole world Christian. Of course, if any church is where the children and young people have none of these things, then it is the duty of such a church to

furnish what it can. But I don't think I would call such a church "institutional." And as for having it open all the time, that depends on what is going on when it is open. Certainly, I wouldn't open it on week days until I was pretty sure that on Sundays Christ was welcome and felt at home.

In a word, let all your changes be made after careful thought and with a conviction of their need. And always ask yourself when about to make a change: "Will this help to make my church more religious, more Christlike, and will it help the members to get at the people who are without Christ and win them to Him?" If you can honestly say yes to that, then make the change no matter who opposes you.

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER SIXTEEN

XVI

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: The report you give of the condition of your church records is certainly not very encouraging. I can understand how you must have felt to look about the town all one afternoon for a member and then to discover that he had been dead for ten years. You say that there are at least 150 names on the church register that your board knows nothing about. Now, ain't that fact and the other things you mention about the records enough to show what way the wind has been blowing?

Your church has had its troubles, no doubt about that—troubles for which the church itself was not altogether to blame. But why didn't the church adjust itself to the changes that were taking place in its neighbourhood? I'll tell you. It was not so much the failure to use right methods as it was downright neglect and worse. Of course no business man would think in this day of using the methods that were in fashion a hundred or even twenty-five years ago. He couldn't do it and keep his business six months unless he had unlimited capital. But how much worse than out-of-date methods is dishonest bookkeeping? For that is what I call the state of things you mention about your church register. It is a cheat

and a fraud. It pretends to give as facts what ain't facts. It says there are so many members in the church, when there are, according to your statement, two or three hundred less than what is reported. It may be said, in justification of this condition of things, that it is due to carelessness and not to deliberate misrepresentation. That is no reason; it is only an excuse and a very weak one at that. It wouldn't stand for a minute among business men. A bookkeeper must not make mistakes. For an accountant to guess at figures would mean his instant discharge if not his arrest. Suppose an employee in the government census bureau should guess at certain returns and then put out a statement purporting to be an accurate report, what would be thought of him? In plain English he would be looked on as a dishonest man.

Now, it is your solemn duty to go through that church record and, as far as you can, make it a correct showing of the actual condition of your charge. It will take time that you might be giving to sermons, to study and visiting, but it is your first duty as a matter of good business policy and of morals and you should keep at it until you have that record as near the facts as you can make it. That much you must do as a sin-offering for your careless (and shall I say dishonest?) predecessors, and for your own moral discipline. And see to it that your committee on church records, appointed by the quarterly conference, does its duty, as it will if the

pastor looks after it. This will give you a chance to work a little machinery that is usually rusting in the average church. And when you come to get all the machinery that is now in our church in operation—those quarterly conference committees that usually exist only on paper and the rest of it—it occurs to me that you'll have about all you can handle for a while.

It will be well for you, as soon as you get around to it, quietly to find out something about the financial accounts—how they are kept and what they show. They will have a lesson for you. And don't let any one make you believe that the minister hasn't anything to do with the financial interests of the charge. It is not the business of the minister to solicit subscriptions and he ought not to seek to know what any particular person is giving, lest it influence him to favour the large against the small giver, but he ought to know the plan and keep an eye open to disbursements, for he will discover sooner or later that many official boards, though they have business men as members, do not use business methods in running the affairs of the church. For some reason men come to act as though the methods or rather lack of methods that would ruin a business, in a few months will do for a church. It is the work of the minister to show and to insist upon a better way.

There will always be a dispute, I suppose, over the question as to what is the minister's and what is the layman's part in the carrying on of

the church's work. As I see it the work is one, and everything that relates to the success of the church belongs to all. I will not concede as a layman that I am to be denied the privilege of sharing in the spiritual work of the charge, nor will I admit that the minister has nothing to do with what we call the business of the church. Of course, there ought to be division of labour so that every one shall have his part—the part he can do best—and that church will succeed best that comes nearest to giving every one his place. But if I understand the apostle Paul he never admits that one place is higher or more important than another. Everything, as I see it, depends on the motive and spirit in which the work is done. Now, just as a true father looks after food and clothing for his children as well as for their mental and moral training, so will a true minister have an eye to everything that concerns his church. He is the appointed leader of the church and every true leader knows as much about details as possible. And with this knowledge and because he is the leader he will outline his plan of campaign and that plan will consider everything that belongs to the church. Not a single element will be left out.

I recall a minister that was sent to our charge some years ago—you would remember him if I should mention his name—who took the ground that he had nothing whatever to do with the business of the charge. He wouldn't preside at the official board meetings if he could help it. He

seldom or ever came to Sunday-school. The young people knew him by sight, that was about all. He believed, or acted as though he believed, that he was called only to preach great sermons. And he wasn't a bad preacher. When some one of us would go to him to ask his advice about this or that he would say:

"Now, brother, I have nothing to do with the business of the church; I leave that to you laymen. You know I am your hired man and when you want me to do anything just tell me and if possible [he meant 'if convenient'] I will accommodate you."

I got very tired of that kind of a reply and I said to him one day:

"A minister who thinks himself a hired man ain't fit to be a minister. You've been sent here to be our leader and if you don't want to lead you'd better get into the ranks as fast as you can."

That's about what I said and I was pretty stiff when I said it, for I was considerably worked up. For one I don't propose to have any hired man for my pastor and I believe all sensible laymen, who don't want to boss the job themselves, agree with me. Why, just read your Discipline if you don't believe I'm right. Take the matter of the church property; if it has been properly conveyed it belongs to the Methodist church for the use of its regularly appointed ministers, not to the local society. No board of trustees can shut out one of our ministers from the pulpit. The minister

presides at the official board meeting—that is, if he knows his place. He is president of the Sunday-school board and has a place in the young people's societies through which he has the power to determine their work and policy. He nominates the stewards and the class-leaders. Now, all this power is meant for something. It means that the pastor is expected to be the leader of the church—not the dictator, far from that, but the leader. And if he can't lead then I must question his call to the ministry, for the ministry means more than preaching; it means the care of the flock and the true shepherd always goes before the sheep and they follow him, for they know his voice.

In my judgment there is nothing so much needed in the Methodist church to-day, and for that matter, in all the churches, as leadership. Our people were never more loyal or more ready to be led. But they will have a real leader or none. The man who comes to one of our churches intending to play the dictator—to boss the job, as one might say—will find himself in trouble. The day of the boss is pretty near over, though we do find him in politics and once in a while in the church, but he's not going to last much longer. The leader is another kind of an individual altogether. He is not seeking merely for power; that is, for power for its own sake or for his own advantage. He is unselfish and humble. He knows that God has spoken to him and has told him to do something. And when he comes the people know that they

are to follow him. That is what I would have every minister be—a true leader.

And if the minister is a true minister he will be a leader—for ain't it his one business to be a shepherd to his flock? But to be a leader means that one must have beside a programme knowledge of his surroundings and the people with whom he is to work. He won't try to do everything himself—far from that. He will have assistants on whom he can depend to run his errands—not his, but the Lord's errands—and to hold up his hands when they are ready to fall. And that reminds me that I wanted to say, before closing this letter, that you cannot do a better thing than to persuade your church to give you one or more helpers—a corps of trained workers who are engaged to give all their time to the church. I wouldn't displace the unpaid workers, for that would be to do away with the church itself, all of whose members are workers if they are Christians, but I would have in all our city churches a body of trained assistants to every pastor. We simply must have them, that is all there is to it. And this body of trained men and women—men as well as women—will be able to do more, in my judgment, to win back the scattered sheep to the church than all the improved machinery that has been or will be invented. It is the divine plan to save the world—the contact of men with men. When our church can send out enough workers who will go to labouring-men and all kinds of people with hearts that beat in sympathy

with human needs and troubles, we'll not find it so hard to win and keep the multitudes. Begin with one helper, if you can't get more, but be sure you get some one who has a love for the work and, above all, has good judgment, sympathy and patience. Then push on under a full head of steam.

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER SEVENTEEN

XVII

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: What I said in my last letter about the pastor being the leader of the church was not intended to mean that he must assume the place by a running jump over the heads of the people and land on somebody's toes with his number tens. No, that is not what I meant. In point of fact, the true leader will never do anything like that; for, in the first place, he ain't a fool, and in the second place, he ain't going to get his rightful place by stage tricks—striking his breast and waving his sword—nor will he be apt to do anything suddenly. The true leader, Henry, is both patient and modest. He is not demanding anything and he don't expect the world to be changed in a minute.

I say this in view of what you write about your official board. You say that it "turned you down." Well, that wasn't a nice thing to do, I admit. An official board ought to be very generous to its pastor and presiding officer, especially when he is a young man and a bit over-sensitive. But some boards are not noted for their generosity, and when they feel that the pastor is a little too positive, they are inclined to take a fall out of him just for fun or to test his mettle.

Had I been in your place I wouldn't have pro-

posed anything on which they could have taken issue until I had been a little surer of my ground. Wise men don't gamble and they don't take chances so long as there are so many things we can be sure about. I hope that your recent experience will be a warning to you—a warning against rashness, not against courage which you can't have too much of and which shows itself as much by its modesty as by its power never to say die when the time comes.

I understand that you wrote in confidence when you referred to your board as a menagerie. You ought to know, Henry, being a Methodist, that a menagerie is the next thing to a circus and that is something good Methodists are supposed to give a wide berth to. I don't like that word menagerie, though you may not mean by it just what I think you do.

You go on to say that this menagerie of yours is under the control of a "triumvirate," which, after much worry and search, I take to be a kind of three-cornered partnership, whose members appear to have agreed to stand or fall together. On general principles I would say that such a thing is impossible. And I feel pretty sure that when you've followed the thing up you'll find that one man is running the business. If the others think they have an equal voice that would only go to show that the real boss has more than ordinary ability in covering up his tracks. Your statement that these three men appear on the church committees as "Smith, Brown, Jones;"

“Jones, Brown, Smith;” “Brown, Smith, Jones,” proves nothing. Some one of these three men is the real chairman of all the committees, whatever may be the position of his name. The genuine boss always gets in his work no matter where his name appears or whether his name appears or not.

And now, for the sake of the argument, suppose that you have a menagerie with a ringmaster at the head of it—I say “ringmaster,” though that term may apply best to a circus; I confess not to be well up in those matters—who is to blame for its existence?

I think the preachers are themselves to blame. Who put those men on the official board? The preachers did. Who have kept them there? The preachers. Who have permitted them to develop a boss to rule them and the church? Why, the preachers.

Granted that your board is as bad as you say—though I suspect you are a little nettled over your being turned down, as you called it, and are a little too severe in your criticism, but suppose you are right—don’t that fact speak louder than any words of mine of carelessness and neglect in the original appointments and in the careful weeding out of those who have lost their religion or have become, for one reason or another, unfitted for the work committed to them? For, in the matter of a church board, some one must exercise at least as much care in the original selection of the members and in getting rid of useless material as

a business house does, and you ought to know what that means.

No business, in this day, would live six months if its managers and superintendents were not looked after. It is no evidence that because a man is competent this year that he will be competent next year. Some men lose their grip on things or they degenerate through bad habits. Other men, with a love of power, will gradually get matters into their own hands, simply for the pleasure of the thing. They want to feel that they are running the machine. If such persons are allowed to go on for any length of time unchecked, they will sooner or later oust even the proprietors of the business; I have seen them do it.

Now, I like to believe that no man in our church deliberately sets out to be a "boss." At least, I never have seen such a person, though I have heard there are such. I think the boss develops hardly without himself being aware of what is going on. He may be a man that really seeks the best interest of the society, and in his desire to do all the good he can—and with the enthusiasm of the average steward and trustee to let him do all he can—he finally comes to believe that the church couldn't exist without him. And if with his personal influence he has money or can command the money of others, why, there you have a full-fledged manager. All the time the man may be losing his spiritual grip. The probability is that he is losing it, for it takes

a good deal of religion to keep a man humble and modest when he is ambitious for power and place, or when the other members are telling him that he is the one man to save the day. And when you have an influential man that likes to manage a church and has lost his piety, you've certainly got a hard proposition on your hands.

I have spoken of the blame attached to the minister for permitting the growth of a boss in the church. I think I am right. It's the minister's business to see that the church is made and kept a democratic institution, as it will be if everybody is looked after and the governing body is carefully sifted. It is the business of the minister to see that the whole church is represented on his official board. He should have upon his board the poor man as well as the rich man, the mechanic as well as the clerk and the professional man. If the church ever expects to get back the working man it must see to it that working men are in its councils. Lawyers, doctors, bankers cannot legislate for the labouring man and the rich man cannot legislate for the poor man. They may want to do so and be perfectly sincere in their purpose, but it is impossible. But more than that. They haven't the ability, much as they may desire to rule well. They haven't the sympathy just because they are not in the same occupation and don't have to bear the same trials. On the other hand the working man and the poor man cannot legislate for professional and business men.

It takes all kinds of men to rule all kinds of

men. That is, as I understand it, the principle on which our nation is built—that it takes all the people to rule all the people. It ain't always carried out in practice—not in Washington, anyway, and even here in Indiana you would think, if you visited our legislature, that lawyers were about the only people who were fit to govern our state. But the church ought to set the right example for everybody. And the Methodist church, of all churches, ought to be democratic. Its theology is democratic. It holds that every man may be saved, since Christ died for every man. It preaches that every man is as good as every other man if he behaves himself—that one man's soul is as precious in the sight of God as another's, that before God there are no rich and poor, master and servant, minister and layman. That is what it teaches and it is presumed that its government carries out this idea. Some people do say we have machinery that smells of the dark ages, but it ain't Methodism.

Now, it is your business to see that the democratic principles of our church are carried into effect. You won't be able to bring about a revolution in a month or even a year. Sudden changes almost always result in worse conditions than before. Anarchy is always followed by a greater tyranny than what the anarchist sought to overthrow by his senseless efforts. Even the "boss" has his rights as he has his friends. You are to save him if you can—save him to himself and to the church.

The day for throwing people out of the church has about passed away. The Master didn't drive Judas out ; He simply permitted him to pass out when He saw He couldn't keep him in. The man who seems to be running your church probably started out all right, but he gradually lost his religion in one way or another, possibly by being obliged to carry too heavy a load for the church—carrying a load that other men, and possibly pious men, as they were regarded, refused to carry. Let it be your work to win these back to the spiritual way of looking at things. Persuade them to come to prayer-meeting. Visit them at their homes and have a word of prayer with them. Show them that you have the spirit of Christ, and that will do more to convince them that they need something than all your talk. Be sure that you show no resentment when they turn you down, as you call your recent experience. Bring in new material and encourage all the members to express themselves on all points whether they pay little or pay much. Show by your own conduct that the man or woman who lives a praying life and seeks to promote religion is the most valuable member—more valuable than any one without piety, no matter how much he contributes—and, gradually, with careful handling of your material, a new day will dawn for your church. When the Master is present every time you appear among your people it will be seen that the spirit of a true brotherhood is growing and in that atmosphere

the "boss" will disappear and the man and brother will take his place. Let everything you touch reflect an unselfish concern for the Master's cause.

Never get into the habit of thinking that opposition to you is necessarily opposition to Christ or that the man who won't see things as you do is thus proved to be a backslider or a fool. Be firm in everything that has to do with principle or with the direct command of the Lord, but be very gentle with all men who are honestly seeking to do right, even though they seek that right thing by what seems to you a roundabout way. Always keep in mind how ignorant you were once yourself. It was one of the greatest of men and leaders who said: "The servant of the Lord must not strive."

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER EIGHTEEN

XVIII

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: It was a happy day for me and your mother, that day your telegram came telling us that God's best gift to man or woman, a little babe, had found its way without mistake or accident to its mother's arms and to all our hearts, for, though neither your mother nor myself has seen the little stranger, already we have found a warm place for him where we hope he will always want to stay.

And so I am a grandfather! Well, well, how the years do run away with a busy man! It makes me seem a little older to be called grandfather, but I don't feel a day older than when I first looked upon your face and called you my son. That was a great day for me. Perfectly happy and perfectly helpless, like a boy with a toy engine that he knows nothing about, afraid to start it up and hardly able to keep his hands off of it. And, by the way, that illustration of the engine just about hits a boy. A boy is all right if you know how to handle him and if you keep him on the track, but look out for explosions if you don't know how to manage the fires and don't keep enough water in the boiler.

But, of course, I don't need to tell you how to look after children. Haven't you told your con-

gregation many a time just how to do it? Between the preachers who haven't any children and the old maids who run the child-congresses or whatever you call them, I guess the world don't need any more advice on the subject of child-training. But I will just say this to you, Henry, that what you don't know about the training of children would fill a Carnegie library. Now, don't be offended, for I am speaking out of my own experience. I thought I knew about all there was to be known regarding children when you were born. And the first and last thing in my thought was to have prompt and perfect obedience. Well, when you were not much more than a week or two old, as I remember, you set up a howl over some foolish thing—an empty stomach or something like that. I told you in my most dignified voice to dry up, or words to that effect. But you kept right on as though I didn't exist. And the more I talked the louder you howled. I remembered what I had said about prompt obedience and I—I—spanked you. I'm ashamed to confess it, and I want now to ask your forgiveness for being such a lunatic. My only consolation is that there were so many thrashings you deserved that you never got that that early mistake may not be laid up against me. I mention this as one of many experiences that show how little I really knew about children or about my duty to them. Let me, out of my experience, simply say this, that for the first few years you'd better take it for granted that God

has put into your hands something to teach you what human nature is and that you are to learn from your child before you can expect to teach it anything.

And another thing, remember that a preacher's child is just like every other child—no better and possibly no worse. Just remember that, and then, just as any sane person would do, set out to make your child all that it can be. Don't preach your sermons to it, or, if you do, be sure that you yourself are living out those sermons every day before the child. I take it for granted that your sermons are orthodox. A man can't afford to preach anything else when he is a father.

You have already found my check for a hundred dollars. Probably that was more interesting reading than my letters. It is short and to the point, as your sermons ought to be. But I want you to understand that it ain't for a loan as you asked. I want you to accept it as payment for that first spanking, or if you think this is too high a price to pay, then give it to the baby.

The point is that I don't want you to take it as a loan. This is the time when most young married people, and ministers in particular, are tempted to tie themselves up for life with debt. I have warned you from time to time against a good many things but I want now to warn you against Satan himself. He is called by many names in the Bible, but I want to tell you that his present day name is debt. It comes, as the Bible says the devil sometimes comes, as an angel of light.

That is why so many are brought into bondage. Before the man is aware of what is going on he is tied hand and foot. I think a man may overcome about every sin, but debt is worse than sin because it is the cause of so much sin.

As I have said, debt is Satan himself. And for a minister to come under the power of debt is to be shorn of his strength. He will gradually lose his independence if he doesn't get out of debt and when a man has lost that how can he preach with any power? He will be thinking—and the more honest he is the harder he will be thinking—of the man who holds his notes and whether he will push the payment or, what is even worse, will presume to lord it over him just because he has the whip-hand in the shape of an obligation of some sort. If he is in debt to his butcher or groceryman or tailor he won't be very ready to call on those people and ask them about their souls for fear they will tell him that they would probably feel better if they had the amount of the little bill that is due them. If you are in debt to another preacher he will prove to be a very good man if he don't hint of some way by which you can serve him—sending him to General conference or something of that sort. So, you will understand why I don't want you to have this hundred dollars as a loan. There may be a time when you can help me or some one in greater need by that hundred dollars, but remember that you don't owe it.

I think I can understand how ministers are

tempted almost more than other people to get into debt. The churches are so careless about money matters! In fact, some of them ain't even honest. The work of the ancient Israelites in being compelled to make bricks without straw is nothing compared to what some ministers are asked to do or rather compelled to do. Their churches put them on small salaries and then hold back the salaries till they get ready to pay them. Some churches seem to think that the minister, just because he is a minister, can stand off the grocer and the butcher and the rest of the people from whom he buys his living, or else that he can live like an Indian—eat enough, when he has a little money, to keep him for a week or a month without eating when there is nothing to buy with. If that ain't worse than having people make bricks without straw I can't think of anything that is worse. As I see it, it's even harder than making bricks without mud. I wonder what the Lord has in store for those official boards that put the Egyptian task-masters out of business and then with a tin halo over their heads wonder why their dear pastors are “*so careless about paying their bills.*” Or, if they happen to have a man who has the courage to go hungry and wears his clothes until they are threadbare, these same men will begin to work up an opposition to him on the ground that his health is not good or that he don't dress well enough for such a fashionable congregation as theirs. I have asked what will become of such men.

Don't answer for I know just as well as you do what will become of them, if they don't repent in short order.

But this way of doing with the minister is only a piece with the dealings of the same churches with their other creditors. Bills are sent in again and again, but they are not paid, until at last it is generally understood in the town that to sell to that particular church means to give the goods or the labour away. And all the while the pastor and a few of the members may be at work trying to bring about a revival and the revival don't appear and they don't know what is the matter. Of course the matter is with the church itself. It needs the revival and the only way to get it is to begin to pay its honest debts. Think of a man who puts sand in his sugar looking for a sign from heaven. He will get the sign, but it will be a call to judgment.

I think you understand now just how I feel about churches that don't pay their pastors' salaries when they are due; still the failure of the church does not excuse the pastor going in debt unless, as sometimes happens, he has something which he can fall back on in case of need. Obligations that stand on such a foundation I don't class with ordinary debts. Still, under the most favourable conditions, the minister had better make almost any sacrifice than contract them. Let him live on rye bread and water, but let him not get into bondage to any man. If Christ has

made him free then let him stay free. He may not shine among society people, but he will be honest, and honesty is rare enough in this world to be something of a curiosity and to have its own power to influence men and women.

All this has its bearing on your present field. Your increase in salary, so far as it appears to be an increase, has probably proved to be almost entirely on paper. For instance, you have to pay almost twice as much for the ordinary necessities of life as you paid in the country. Vegetables in the country were practically of no cost. You raised them yourself or they were left at your door. The same thing may be said for butter and eggs and milk. You didn't have to wear broadcloth in the country (I hope you don't wear it where you are, for that matter). In fact, everything costs in the city. So it happens, before you know what is going on, that your salary, which seemed at first almost princely as compared with the modest amount you received in the country, is spent before you've earned it. That is why I give you this fair warning and why in former letters I urged you not to be in a hurry to get into the city. I thought of some things that probably you didn't think of, among them the possibility, that has now been realized, of my being a grandfather. And before I die I may be a grandpa two or three times. It's a fine thing to be a grandfather, I admit, but like everything else that's of any value in this world or the next—it costs. It is worth all it costs, provided the

costs are paid, otherwise it is a new kind of chain to wind around a man and squeeze the breath out of him. But I am persuaded better things of you, a phrase that I think I got from Paul, who, I believe, decided, in view of the present distress, not to lead about a wife or other relative, all of which shows that Paul was a man who looked over the ground very carefully and governed himself accordingly, never making his shoes larger than his leather and refusing even to wear shoes unless he had the leather or the money to buy it. And if my memory serves me right, I think it was this same Paul who said, "Owe no man anything, but to love one another," which means not to go into debt unless you are sure it will help on the kingdom of heaven, which it won't.

Still your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER NINETEEN

XIX

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: You are certainly having your troubles. I was not expecting to hear quite as soon as this that you had been given your walking papers, but it is pretty evident that is what the visit of certain members of the official board meant. All that talk about your health is only a polite way of saying you are not wanted any longer. It's a hard blow, but you are going to meet it, I am sure, as a man and a Christian should.

From what you say and from what I have heard about you in one way or another I should say that on the whole you have done your duty as you understood it. No man does all that he might do, which is to say that no man is entirely perfect, but making due allowance for a father's prejudice I believe it can be said, in all fairness, that you have not failed. I don't think you have reminded all your congregation that you are the successor of Beecher, as that newspaper fellow tried to make out, and I don't believe that you have made no mistakes in your dealings with your board. I rather think you have tried to hurry your members a little too much, which they have resented, but so far as I can learn—and I have learned a good deal more than you think—

you have done the people good and are in a fair way to be popular with them. The young people, it seems, are quite enthusiastic over you. In spite of all this you are told that the church will not expect you to return for another year.

I can well understand your resentment. It is certainly not in accord with Methodist ways for a few men who seldom or ever come to prayer-meeting, are never found in a class-meeting and whose voices have not been heard in prayer during the memory of the average member of the church, to presume to dictate appointments and to tell ministers how long they may stay in churches that belong, not to them nor even to the local membership, but to the whole Methodist church. Of course, I have nothing against churches having their say. But it don't seem right for men here and there to assume the position of the bishop who has been elected and is paid to decide where ministers shall be stationed; but there are such men and they have had their way in so many things that they have almost forgotten that they are Methodists or even Christians.

It ain't right, you say. Of course, it ain't right; but then, Henry, there are a whole lot of things that ain't right, in the church as well as out of it. The church seems to me like a stream of pure water that has been turned into a great river more or less muddy. The pure water, because of its rapid current, manages to escape being swallowed up by the larger body, but every now

and then you can see a little of the muddy water running through the purer stream. The slower the stream runs the more mud it gets. Your present charge has not been known for its swift current and so you must not be surprised at the amount of mud you meet. The world has simply been borne in upon the church. The pure stream has been there but it has been so choked by the big river called the world that it has had neither power nor influence.

But you are probably thinking less of what your church is, or why it is so and so, than of what you are to do in view of your invitation to quit. Well, I must confess that my first impulse was to tell you to put on your coat of mail, get out your sword and fight the thing to the bitter end. I thought of the best way of rallying the members on your side, what picked men I should choose to camp out with the presiding elder and how we might lay siege to the bishop, and finally I had a sort of vision of a half-dozen leading members of your official board taking to the woods while you remained on the ground as a little king on wheels.

These were among the first thoughts that came to me, which show either that I am not yet entirely sanctified or that the devil is not yet dead. I say that was my first impulse; but I have learned that first impulses are not to be followed blindly. In fact, they are seldom to be followed at all. For the most part, they represent us at our worst; our best appears only after we have

thought and prayed, particularly after we have prayed for wisdom and patience, for the spirit of forgiveness and for humility—for that especially. So far as my experience goes, the first thing that is apt to come up is self, and where self is first I know we cannot have a right judgment of anything. That is especially true when we have been abused or what is the same thing, so far as the influence on our judgments is concerned, when we think we have been abused.

After a good deal of thought and the choking down of considerable hot feeling, I believe I have reached a place where I can look at the matter in the right light and put my finger on the main thing. I always find it best, whenever I have a problem that is a good deal mixed, to look for the main thing, just as when travelling I want to keep to the main road and not be led away into by-paths that run nowhere and seem to have no purpose except to get as far away from the main travelled road as possible. Now, the main thing in this problem of yours is not the punishing of this man or that, or your own victory or even your advancement, but the kingdom of heaven. Of course the kingdom of heaven is not indifferent to your interests or mine or to the interests of a living soul on the earth. It could not be and remain the kingdom of heaven, for that has to do with every individual man and every individual woman and child. And I believe, too, that before the kingdom of heaven comes in its power a whole lot of things will have to be changed and I

wouldn't be surprised if there would have to be some funerals here and there. But I am convinced that I haven't the grace and I suspect you haven't the grace to attend to so important a matter. God has His own way of doing the business and He will do it as it ought to be done and in His own time.

When I was younger than I am now I more than half suspected that I might be the instrument of heaven for getting rid of a lot of people, particularly the people I didn't like very well. It is wonderful, when you come to think about it, how much these people you don't like obstruct the path of progress. I think the men who crucified Christ believed He was in the way of the kingdom as they understood the kingdom, but the chief reason for their opposition was their dislike of Him as a man. They didn't like Him and so they couldn't like what He did; they could see no good in Him. The people we like are never, in our estimation, the enemies of the state; it is always the other fellow—the man who is personally distasteful to us. And when we have the power to do so it is very easy to persuade ourselves that we are the divinely appointed agents for their taking-off. We may cloak our real designs under the garb of religion or patriotism or some other good name, but the real animal will show itself sooner or later, and that animal's name is selfishness, intolerance, pride; in fact, he has several names, but they all come to the same thing.

Now, in order that neither you nor I may be tempted in the way I have described, there is but one thing for us to do—*we must keep our hands off*. I know how hard it is to take that stand and keep it. We are apt to argue, or the devil argues for us, that we should always oppose wrong and particularly when that wrong is against ourselves. Who, we ask, will help us if we don't help ourselves?

Now, this is all worldly argument. One of old who had studied the matter long and well and had had plenty of experience, said, once upon a time, "The Lord is thy helper." That is the answer and it is enough.

I remember, and endorse to a certain extent, the statement that while the wicked flee when no man pursueth, they always make better time when some one is after them. That is true, but no man can afford to chase his own enemies. He can't afford to do it for his own sake, for the harder he chases the madder he gets, so that it ain't long before he drops the scales of justice and picks up the murderer's club.

I don't say that God can't use us men to avenge wrong, but *it mustn't be our own wrong*. That is why I urge you not to make any defense in your own case. Just leave the whole matter with God, who has promised to judge you righteously and to make all things work together for your good.

I know what you will say—that it is easy enough to leave things with God; but there are

the presiding elder and the bishop. Well, I guess the presiding elder and the bishop, like your official board, will be taken care of in some way. And you may be surprised to find that all of these are much more interested to have the will of the Lord done than you are apt now to think. Young preachers, I find, are altogether too skeptical of the spirituality of the men that the church has put over them. They have had a hard experience or they know some one who was greatly persecuted or thinks he was—something that is much worse to bear than the reality—and so they conclude that all the church officials are looking only for the advancement of themselves and their friends. Don't you believe a word of it.

But even if all that were true, this is still God's world, remember, and He is still the ruler of it and those who trust in Him are not going to be made ashamed. Go to bed at the usual time and sleep the sleep of the just, if you are that, and in the morning go to your work with a shining face and with perfect confidence in the outcome. Be particularly kind to those who seem to be opposing you or are not very friendly to you. Preach sermons that are full of good cheer for the troubled and the anxious. Don't feel that you must denounce sin for the next few weeks. Tell as much as you can of the mercy and the goodness of God. Visit a good deal in the homes of poverty and where sin and sorrow are. Rejoice with those who do rejoice and weep with those that weep, but in the name of all

that's good and sensible don't growl with those who growl. And pray all the while against pride. Keep always before your eyes the words of the Master, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted"—*shall be exalted*, remember that. When you don't know what else to do, go fishin'

Your affectionate father,
ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER TWENTY

XX

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: That was a fine move on the part of the bishop in sending you back to your present charge, though to tell the truth I hardly expected it. It is so much the fashion nowadays for the official board, or rather for two or three members of the board, to decide about the minister that it is a matter of surprise when the bishop upsets some plans and shows that he has still the appointing power in his own hands, where it belongs. I am still old-fashioned enough to believe in the bishop making the appointments—not the churches, or even the presiding elders. You may not call this democracy, but I do, for the people called Methodists have agreed to it, and when they don't want it any longer they'll say so in a way that will be understood. For one thing it locates responsibility. It will be a bad day for Methodism when no one can tell whether the churches, two or three rich men in each church, the presiding elders or the bishops make the appointments.

But I didn't begin this letter intending to argue the question of appointments. What I had in mind to say was that it won't be an easy thing for you to stay where the bishop sent you to work out your salvation this year—I mean your old

charge. I don't say that if I had had the power I wouldn't have done just what the bishop did, but I would have preferred that you had moved. It was right to send you back but it will be hard for you to stay. The people who wanted you removed will not be glad to see you. They may not leave the church on account of your return or try to burn the parsonage, but they'll not get up a donation party for you and Annie. Most men, even those of good Methodist stock, don't shout over not having their own way. Only the sanctified do that, and many of them I notice spend a good deal of time clearing their throats. You'll have enemies now, no doubt of that, but you mustn't lose a wink of sleep on that account. It may be the very best thing that ever happened to you. Next to having a genuine friend the most useful individual is an enemy; not a two-for-a-nickel enemy, but a big, two-fisted, hard-headed, out and out enemy that loses no chance to give you a clip straight from the shoulder. The people you have need to fear most are those luke-warm critters that never seem to know where they belong—your friends to-day, your enemies to-morrow. For one thing you always know where to find your enemy, and so you always know just what to count on and can make your plans accordingly, but you can never tell which way the other fellow is going to jump. If you happen to count on him opposing you and he takes your side, you are as bad off as if it was the other way; as if you had planned for his

support and he turned you down. I remember once, when I was high muck-a-muck of our local grange, I was trying to put through something or other and had rounded up the men pretty well—those who would stand by me and those who wouldn't. And there was Jack Peters, a scrub farmer living out on the west side of the township, who had done some dirty work in one or two things that I was interested in, and in making up my plans I naturally counted on Peters making a speech at the meeting, where the matter would come up, against me. Well, I went to work and fixed up things with Sam Phillips, our auctioneer, to reply to Peters. Sam prepared a speech that he thought would simply wipe the earth with Peters, and he figured on how he would not only be doing me a favour, which I would not forget, but would be adding greatly to his reputation for eloquence. The time for the meeting came and my two men were there. Things went along pretty slowly for Sam, who was almost bursting with the pent-up eloquence inside him, but Peters didn't seem to be in a hurry. At last he got on his feet with Phillips looking at him as you might imagine a tiger looking at a calf on which it is about to spring. Peters looked 'round the room very slowly and then said: "I heartily endorse the plans of my friend, Mr. Allen, and move that our vote be unanimous." Phillips was the maddest man in the county that night, and actually got up and opposed me and my scheme, and his in-

fluence was strong enough to postpone action for that night. He afterwards came 'round all right and the matter was put through, though it was a close shave. Now, you can see that if Peters had been an out and out enemy instead of one of those weather-cock kind of men that depend on the weather and the wind for their opinions, I wouldn't have had all that trouble.

There's another thing you should remember, and that is that a real enemy is about the best kind of a help you can have, the world being what it is and you being what you are. I mean this: Your enemy will not only be a thorn in the flesh to keep you humble—a thing you can't get along without and succeed—but he will show you your weak points as no one else, not even your friends, will. A genuine enemy that has horse sense will not be apt to talk much of your strong points. He will always pass them by if he can and hit you where you're weak. He will probably make too much of your faults and weaknesses, and your friends will say they don't exist, and you will be tempted to get mad and threaten all kinds of things, but if you're wise you will accept what your enemy says as pretty near the truth. It won't be exactly true, for even enemies exaggerate, but it will do to put beside what your friends say to balance their exaggerations on the other side. The average will represent about what you are.

Your enemy will also serve you well in testing the mettle of your friends and developing their

love for you. Friendship, like every other good thing, has to be tested to be improved, and where there is no improvement there is sure to be decay. Many a man has lost good friends because he never gave them an opportunity to do anything for him. Of course, we musn't ride a free horse to death—I don't mean that—but we must exercise our horses or they will play us some pretty dangerous tricks. Don't be afraid that your real friends will get tired of standing up for you when there is occasion for it, and the more they do that the more they will care for you. Flatterers get tired, friends never do. And your true friends will like nothing so well as a good lively scrap with your enemies.

As to your treatment of your enemies I hope you'll never allow yourself to believe that there is any exception to the rule the Lord laid down once for all—I mean the rule about loving your enemies and praying for them. If it's true—which it ain't—that you can't do that, then it's your business to get out of the ministry just as soon as you can. You have no business preaching any of Christ's words while you are saying that there are some of those words you yourself can't follow. That, I think, is the worst sort of infidelity, to say that you believe in Christ and yet hold that His commands can't be obeyed. But there are preachers who do say that, or what is the same thing, they act on that principle. They have bitter thoughts of the members of their churches and of their fellow-ministers.

Many a time in my visits to the conferences—which ain't as frequent as they used to be—I have heard remarks of one minister about another that would have shaken my faith, if I hadn't been well grounded. You'd almost think they'd like to poison one another if you didn't attend the love feast and hear how much they loved each other. I always attend the love feast and so I don't take very seriously what is said in the loafing-room. But I must admit that what is said there makes it impossible to accept, at their face value, the testimonies in the love feast. I put both together and then strike an average and I think I come out pretty near right.

What I want to come at is this: You must work this year not as one who has won a great victory, simply because the bishop refused to listen to your opponents and returned you to your charge, but as one who has had put upon him a great responsibility by the church, and one which you will have to give an account for in the great day of judgment; not alone on the way you have managed it but in the spirit you have conducted yourself before your people and the world. Put out of your heart the last drop of bitterness that may have lodged there. Continually recall who your enemies are and how much of humanity is common to them and to you. Don't forget that they have human feelings and failings just as you have, and that when the account is settled by the great Judge of all it may be shown that you are not altogether blameless. They are not inspired,

and must learn about you in about the same way that you have learned about them. They have heard false reports of what you said or didn't say, just as you may have heard false reports of them. Then, remember their troubles, for you may be sure that they have them; some sickness in their homes, some boy or girl gone wrong, some financial difficulty. Remember all that, and then pray for them. That is something no enemy can stand out against very long—*prayer*. He can stand out against anything else, opposition, sarcasm, the marble stare, the treating him as though he didn't exist, all that, but he can't resist prayer very long. Then, watch for opportunities to do something for him. Don't bore him or try to coax him to like you, but just do him a real kindness. And you will win him at last, and when you do win him, provided he is a real good enemy to begin with, he will become your best friend. Let me see, was it not that great enemy of Christ, Paul, that became the Lord's foremost supporter? Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER TWENTY-ONE

XXI

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: I received your last letter quite a while ago, but have been too busy with one thing or another to answer before now. Of course, you have heard from us through your ma's letter to Annie which was sent, I believe, with that last box of preserves to save postage. That's the woman of it. To save a postage stamp she gives away ten dollars' worth of jam—and pays the freight on the jam. But I've given up trying to understand women. In fact men, and even babies, are sometimes too much for me.

I was interested and considerably disgusted regarding what you wrote of your experience with certain persons that we call dead-beats down here. How you can be taken in by such gentry would be impossible of belief if I didn't know that ministers, and especially Methodist ministers, are the most gullible people in the world. I can understand how that comes about, and in a way it is a credit to the ministers. I, for one, wouldn't care to have for my pastor a man who never was imposed upon. It would show he hadn't much of a heart. In such a world as this, where none of us is as good as he might be, it

won't do for any man to assume that he can always draw the line between good and evil or that he is a past master in detecting what is inside a man on first sight. I want to say this, in all fairness, and in order to set myself right with you and the ministry in general. Between a minister who can never be fooled, and one who gives his overcoat to the first tramp that applies for it I really think I'd choose the latter. He may do a good deal of harm in one way or another but he is at least in the way of being taught. The other fellow seems to be beyond hope.

Your question as to what I think of the Lord's saying about giving to him that asks and not turning away from him that wants to borrow shows where a good deal of your trouble is. I don't pretend to be a scholar, you understand, or anything of that sort, and I don't spend much time on the commentaries, which I have always found to have plenty of help where you don't need it and nothing to say when you do. There's one thing I've always taken for granted about the Bible, and that is that the men who wrote it had at least common sense. I'm sure the Lord had it in good measure. He seems to understand human nature from the ground up. And if He was on earth to-day I know He wouldn't be imposed upon by dead-beats. It is said that the Lord knew what was in man. Well, do you think any one who knew men wouldn't know these sharpeners? And, knowing them, would He treat them as though they were honest

poor? Of course He wouldn't. He wouldn't give them the cold shoulder, exactly, but He'd let them know, as He let the Pharisees know, that He was on to their game. Suppose a tramp came to the Lord asking Him for a dime to buy a drink of whiskey with, do you for a moment think He'd give him that dime? Suppose some sharper came to Him asking the use of His name for some scheme or other that wasn't what it pretended to be, would the Lord give him the recommendation he asked? You know He wouldn't. And the way He'd act towards those I have mentioned He would act towards the whole class of frauds. He wouldn't turn away from them but He wouldn't help on their schemes. Now, this is just what I have against the ministry. The minister is not only sympathetic but he is also sentimental and often childish. Besides, he is not always honest. Now, don't get mad until you understand what I mean by that word. An honest man is one that not only acts honestly in his own deals but tries to protect other people. And the man who carelessly recommends something or somebody he knows nothing about is not quite honest. He won't rob others himself, but he seems to be willing to let others rob, if they want to; in fact he often helps them by giving them the use of his influence—the influence which he did not get on his own name or work, but through the church he represents.

As you see, I feel a little deeply on this subject.

Well, I have good reason to. When you were but a child and I was working hard to save a little for a rainy day and had about five hundred dollars in the bank there came to our house a well dressed stranger with a good voice and a winning manner, one of those men that act as though you must have known them forever, and talked to me and your mother about an investment that seemed to be as good as though you had the profits right in your hand or where you could reach out and take them. But I was careful. I didn't want to run no chances. Then the stranger brought out his last card. It was a long list of recommendations from prominent people. Among those who highly recommended the scheme was a former pastor and our present presiding elder. I think there was a bishop or two on the list. Well, I was young then, and enthusiastic in the faith, and believed that ministers were the next thing to angels, and bishops were a little above the angels, and so I invested my little all. That night I felt a trifle shaky and almost wished I had kept my money, but the fact that banks were not always sure and local investments not profitable, and the vision of all those names of good men, helped to make me feel easier and I finally fell asleep and dreamed of all kinds of wealth. The days passed, and I got uneasy and wrote to the company asking how things were going. I got a letter back that reassured me. Everything was all right, but there was some delay. In a few weeks I would hear

something that would please me, and so on and so on. The few weeks passed and I got another letter explaining that there had been a little trouble and that the investors would have to put up a little more money so as to have complete success. Opposition had been met with but it would be swept away, and then the world would know that right was bound to triumph. I didn't reply right away. Then there came another statement to the effect that if more money did not come in at once the enterprise would have to be abandoned right on the point of victory. As I have said, I was young and there were still those names before me to inspire me to confidence. So I sent on all that I had, fifty dollars. That was the last I heard from the company, and the last I saw of my money. The papers, in a few weeks, announced that another wild-cat scheme for making money had failed. That was a mistake. The scheme was a great success—for *the promoters*. They made a fortune. The only people that failed were such innocents as myself who were foolish enough to think that ministers wouldn't put their names to schemes they didn't know were honest. That experience almost killed me, as it seemed, but I guess I needed it. I pretty near gave up for a year or so. The neighbours said I looked consumptive and your mother was a good deal worried. But I pulled through all right and am still able to eat my three meals a day. It was a pretty costly experience, but it paid. It was the

last time I bought a gold brick on anybody's recommendation.

I suppose, according to your theory, that I was under a moral obligation to give to that fellow that five hundred and then to his company that fifty. They asked for that money, and I am obliged to give to him that asks me, ain't I? That is the way you understand the Lord's words if I ain't mistaken. And that shows how much your theological education and your commentaries do for you. Now, as I have said, I ain't a scholar. I never studied Hebrew or Greek or any of them languages. I don't know a thing about the higher criticism of the Hecks-a-tooch, and the only time I was in a theological seminary was when I went in with you to see the President. But as I read my Bible I don't see where the Lord ever says we are to give to those who ask *what* they ask, or to those who want to borrow from us *what* they want. As I remember the words the Lord says, "Give to him that asketh thee and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." That is it. We are to give to him that asks and are not to turn away from the man that wants to borrow. And that's just what I try to do. When a tramp or a dead-beat or an honest man for that matter who has some of the signs of the tramp or the dead-beat comes to me I always give to him. I give him time enough to tell his story, if it ain't too long, and then I give him not what he wants but what I think he needs, and all the time I try to feel towards him as I

know Christ feels towards all men. Even tramps and confidence men are human beings and have some interest in the blood of the Crucified. They can be saved. And it is my business to do all I can to help those men to be men, and the first thing is to make them ashamed of their present life and to seek to live a better one. The first lesson for all such people is to make their present occupation unprofitable, and the best thing I can do is to refuse to give them money or that which stands for money. So I don't make a practice of feeding tramps, though to tell the truth when I see one coming I get away and let your ma receive the gentleman. She has no conscience on that subject and feeds everybody that comes along. I try to reason with her but it seems to do no good. She acts as though she believed what I said and then goes right off and feeds the next man that comes along.

You have a hard place, no doubt of that, and the confidence man knows it. The minister mustn't have a reputation for turning men down. He must be sympathetic, and all that. But at the same time he must be firm and just. Remember that you have a reputation for good sense to maintain, and for honesty, which is quite as important as a reputation for sympathy. Treat every man as your brother and do just what you believe will do him the most good. That is the rule, and in the end he will thank you, and your church will come to know that it has a minister

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that ain't a catspaw for gold brick men. And
that may be worth more to the Kingdom than all
your sermons.

Your affectionate father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER TWENTY-TWO

XXII

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: You are now where all the mettle that is in you will be tested for everything that it's worth. In the country and in the city you had problems enough, but in your appointment to a suburb you have something more than a problem ; you should look upon it as a life and death struggle.

The suburb, as I have observed it, is not fish, flesh or fowl, but something of all three with a seasoning of its own. It looks like the country—in spots—and the people try to act as though they were in the country, but it's all a failure, for they are city people whose interests centre in the city, and they can't get away from it no matter how hard they try. It is there they make their living. They are there early in the morning and stay until late at night. When they get home they are pretty nearly whipped and they want to settle right down in a comfortable chair and just do nothing, or if they have strength enough to move about they want to spend their time in some kind of play. Their whole thought being on that city work, by which they expect to get rich and astonish the natives, why, there's nothing that interests them much but what will prepare them for to-morrow. Of course, they have

a little interest in their homes and surroundings. They want good streets, good water, plenty of light for the streets, and once in a while they take to politics just for the fun they can get out of it. As for religion the only text suburbanites like to hear a sermon on is, "Sleep on now and take your rest." They want churches but they must be well cushioned and restful to the eye. The preachers must be the easy going kind who will not worry them with Sunday night services or hint that heaven is a superior place to that particular suburb or that hell contains any suburbanites. Class and prayer meetings and revivals are regarded as useful for ordinary mortals, perhaps, but are a fifth wheel for a suburbanite whose only need is to catch his train regularly every morning and evening, and make his million on the Board of Trade. Certainly, that is the way suburbanites seemed to me to look at things when I was in a suburb. In fact I began myself to look at things that way, and I concluded I must get away back to the city where the temptations were not so great. It was a little cowardly, I admit, and if I had to do it over again I think I would stand my ground and fight it out to a finish.

Now, you are a little differently situated from what I was. You are sent there, you did not go of your own will or choice, and you must preach and work with the same conviction you would be supposed to if you were a missionary in China or Africa. You can't afford to let down an inch

in your conviction of your duty or in preaching the whole counsel of God. Tell the people what will become of them if they don't repent with the same plainness with which you would preach to the slums. It's a great mistake to suppose that a respectable sinner is any less a sinner than the poor fellow that can't afford a coat. And it is just as great a mistake—but one that preachers are falling into everywhere—to think that you must talk to the respectable sinner in highfalutin language about flowers and stars. No, Henry, if there's one man that needs plain talk, it's the rich and respectable sinner. And by plain talk I don't mean abuse, far from that, nor sensationalism nor personalities of any kind. The minister of Christ must have his own heart right all the time, he must be a gentleman in the pulpit and out of it, and he must never single out this man or that as being a greater sinner than others who do the same things in another way.

You will need, in the second place, to keep in close touch with the city yourself and to bring your church into sympathy with it. It will not be hard for you now to have sympathy for the city, for you have just left a city church, but if you don't look out you'll soon come to forget that there is a city near you, except as you go there to trade or for some lecture or other, and it won't be long unless you watch yourself before you will be talking as the average suburbanite does about the noisy and dirty city and how glad you are to be away from it. Then, you ought

to lead your church to interest itself in the city a good deal more than it does. It was my observation that the suburban church lived as though it had no more to do with the city than it had with China, hardly as much in fact. You should show your people that the suburb belongs to the city, is in fact a part of the city. Certainly the country won't own it. So it is your business to get your people to see this and to do something about it. Interest your young people in the work and problems of the city. That won't be hard to do if you go about it right. Take some of them to visit some good mission or some charity for the poor. Have the workers in those institutions come out and talk to the young people. Get your Ladies' Aid Society to do some sewing for one of the hospitals. The interest will grow and in time even the men will wake up. When that time comes you will see that your church is having a new birth. That is just what the suburban church needs—a new birth. It is living for itself which means, if I understand the Lord's words, that it is dying. A church that won't lose its life for the sake of the world is bound to die, and the sooner the better.

You will be tempted in the suburb to give up your pastoral visiting. That would be fatal, more fatal even than in the country or the city. In no place is it harder to reach the average man and woman, through the pulpit, than right where you are. People in the suburb seem to have little or no conscience about going to church. They go

when they feel like it and usually they don't feel like it. At least that was my observation. The only thing left then is to find these people in their homes, which will usually be open to a pastor, I think, for the suburbanite is what you would call hospitable. He won't set the dog on you. In fact he likes to have visitors, provided they won't stir him up too much or ask him to do something. At first you'd better act upon this hint and merely call as a neighbour and chat with him and get acquainted with him. He will ask you to come again—they all do that. In the course of time you will call again, and if you are the man I think you are he will be pleased to see you, and after that it will be comparatively easy to put in a good word for the Lord. Then, you should never forget that trouble is in the suburb as it is in the country and the city. Sickness and death are there and what is worse than either sickness or death. And trouble will be your good angel, as it is of every faithful servant of the Lord. And you will be asked in at such a time, not because you are a brilliant preacher, but because you are a minister of Christ. And in a day or two you will be able to do more for the cause by this kind of service than in months of ordinary pastoral and pulpit work. It is really wonderful what a true servant of Christ can do at such times. Watch for them and prepare yourself to use them to the utmost.

You already see the force of what I said in a former letter about visiting in the suburb during

the day. The men are not there. Quite often the women are gone, too. They are very busy, are the women of the suburb. They have more clubs to attend than you can shake a stick at—mothers' clubs and culture clubs, cooking clubs and card clubs till you can't rest. The Ladies' Aid ain't in it, so far as I could see. The Dorcas Society is laughed at. At least I was laughed at when I asked one of the women of the church I attended if they had a Dorcas Society. She replied, "O my, no!" I am sure she thought I was a hayseed. Besides the women's clubs, there are all kinds of societies for the children. I wonder the poor little things don't strike for more time to play in the good old-fashioned manner that children love so well. But in spite of all these obstacles you'd better keep up your practice of regular pastoral visiting. You'll catch somebody at home, perhaps. Once in a while you will see a servant if you don't find any one of the family, though you should remember that even the servants have their clubs. Keep up your visiting and you'll see results of one kind or another, and it'll all be good, provided you are discreet and pious. Be sure that in nothing you give any one occasion to say that you are not careful to avoid even the appearance of evil. The devil is in the suburb as everywhere else, in spite of the quiet life and the fine houses and lawns and the rest. The devil is there, very often as an angel of light, in which form he is always most dangerous. Always remember that your

good name is the most priceless thing you have. Remember that particularly in your calling and in all your associations. Be especially careful to keep out of what might seem at first to be innocent, but which you must know is in danger of leading you into questionable things. Pray constantly for grace to keep yourself absolutely above suspicion. And always watch out for the temptation to believe the suburb is all right, for it ain't. The last word of the Master, remember, was "Watch." He was thinking of the suburb or something very like it.

Your affectionate father,
ROBERT ALLEN.

LETTER TWENTY-THREE

XXIII

TIPPECANOE, IND.

Dear Henry: Your last letter was pretty short, but it was the best, I think, you ever wrote, certainly it was the best I ever received. It may not have seemed very much to you to say that the Lord had saved you from two things—whining and fear. It may not have seemed much to you, but to me it meant about everything. It showed, first, that the Lord was doing a real work for you, and, secondly, it showed that you were determined to be a true minister of Jesus Christ, whatever else you might or might not be. And that is all I want you to be. That seems to me the only success a minister can have.

To be saved from whining means that you have a different idea now about success from what you had once. I really feared for you at one time. You seemed to me to think that success for a minister meant a good appointment, with all that that includes—nice people, a good salary, your name in the papers, and a good prospect of being sent to the General Conference. Instead of these things you have had a pretty hard time. I have never said this before, but it is the truth, and I think you are now able to hear it. You have not been favoured in the matter of appoint-

ments. I don't think you have had the hardest places, but they have not been the easiest by any means. The bishops and their cabinets have seemed to take it for granted that you would go where you were sent, without kicking, and they just sent you where it looked as though hardly any one else would go. But that, in a way, has been a compliment to you. I don't think they meant it as a compliment, but it was one. I know and you know that some things were not relished very well, but you swallowed your feelings and went to work. And you have succeeded. I don't need to ask any one about it; I know it because of the effect on you. If, as the Lord shows us, success means the conquering of ourselves and the gaining of the power to do our work without complaining, so long as it is the Lord's work, then you have succeeded. Of course, the battle is not yet won, far from that. You have just begun it, but the best part of any battle is the training of the men who are to fight it. And you have become now something of a veteran. You won't skulk and you won't whine. And any man who can have this said of him I call a pretty good type of a veteran.

When you say that the Lord has saved you from fear I understand you to mean that you really believe in the Lord. You believe that His eye is upon you and that He is interested in you and will see you safely through. Now, that I call faith. It ain't enough to believe there is a God, though some preachers seem to me to doubt

even that by the way they act and preach, we must believe that God is going to see us through and that there is no work too hard for Him and no danger so great that He can't pilot us 'round it or through it for that matter. It is this that gives a man true courage, which is not the absence of fear alone, but also the sense of victory which gives hope and joy in work. To be saved from whining and fear, then, means everything to a minister.

This condition, I am sure, you have reached partly by your trials, but chiefly, I think, by making Christ your daily companion and friend. There is no discipline that will make a true minister out of any man. Discipline is all right; it is necessary. But it can't put joy and hope in a man. It can't soften him into real tenderness. Sometimes it makes men hard. Many Christians I have known, pretty good people, too, have grown sour with the passing of the years. They have had trials and these trials have soured them. What they needed was the companionship of Christ. Many a time I have gone to my room to get ready for bed feeling pretty sore at what I regarded as abuse, and to feel abused is the next thing to feeling devilish. But when I knelt to pray and had a sense of the presence of Christ why that bad feeling all melted away, and instead of soreness there came the sense of peace. Then I knew that Christ was there. For did He not promise to give His peace to His followers? And when peace comes to the soul in the midst

of trial I, for one, believe that Christ is pretty near at hand.

I want you to remember this always, that it is Christ that makes the minister. That, in effect, is what I have been trying to impress on you all along, in one way or another. Whatever advice I have given here and there may be all summed up in this—Christ all and in all. It is Christ who has given you the power to overcome your natural tendency to complain at this and that, and what was natural you helped along somewhat now and then. I thought also that you were a little given to fear. You didn't know but that the bishops and the presiding elders might tie you hand and foot and ship you to the cannibal islands. At least you seemed to show that feeling once upon a time when you sent word for me to come to the Conference to save you. But if what you say is true then something has happened, and that something is the knowledge of Christ. It was Paul, I think, who said, "That I might know Him and the power of His resurrection." I understand him to mean that he is longing for that acquaintance with Christ, the resurrected Christ, which will make it possible for him to know that he has Christ's presence all the time, day and night, winter and summer, when travelling, preaching, visiting, writing his letters, all the time. That is Paul. And that is the secret of every successful minister's life. Not very long ago I heard a very eloquent minister preach, but somehow his sermon didn't move me

half as much as some simple efforts I have heard from men of no reputation. I talked with my neighbour, Graham—one of the best business men I ever knew—about it, and he said right out, “The trouble with the man is that he is trying to do it all himself; he ain’t depending on God.” That was a good deal for Graham to say, for he ain’t one of the talking kind, but it was the solemn truth.

If you will make Christ your daily companion you will be right on all questions, or at least you will be pointing in the right direction, which is the next thing to being absolutely right. You will be right on the labour question and all other questions. You will be right on the temperance question. I don’t mean that you will always be preaching on those subjects, far from that. What I do mean is that whenever you touch those subjects you will give out the right note and you will speak with authority and will touch the heart. Not every one will be convinced, you cannot expect that at any time, but every one will be impressed that a man is among them and that he speaks with power.

This friendship of Christ, who is to me the very Son of God and the way to God, is coming to mean more and more as the days pass and I get glimpses once in a while of the better country. I never was much of a theologian and there have been many things in the Bible I couldn’t understand and I suspect no one understands, but these things trouble me no longer. I

have a Friend. Unlike you I am no longer climbing up the mountain, I am going down towards the valley. Down there I see certain dark places that I suspect must be in the neighbourhood of the shadow of death. In a few years, at most, I will be down there. Once I wouldn't look that way. I didn't like to think of it, and the closing part of the twenty-third psalm was not a favourite with me. I liked the first part pretty well, I didn't like the last part. But things have changed. It is the last part I like best. In fact I can say it all out of my own heart, because it is a part of my experience: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." That is the way I feel. All fear has been taken away; Christ has done it.

Now, I trust you will always keep this in mind. You will have many things to face that will seem worse than death. The church has not yet learned how to reward its servants. Its politicians and schemers it has learned how to reward. But didn't Christ say of the Pharisees that they had their reward? Where now are those men? It is not to the Church but God you must look for your reward as a minister. He is rewarding you now in giving you the power not to complain and not to fear, but these represent only the smallest part of all that He has in store. He will make you more than a conqueror. Everything you undertake will prosper, prosper I mean in the sight of the angels and before all

good men. The pleasure you experience now in having overcome your natural tendency to complain and to fear the future is but a drop in the great ocean of the coming joy. You will rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

But you must keep close to Jesus all the way. You must, by your own choice and by your conduct, let Him keep close to you. You must put away all insincerity, all hypocrisy, everything that looks like double-dealing. You must put away selfishness in little things as well as in great things. You must be absolutely pure in heart and life. I mean this must be your spirit and purpose. You can't do it all alone, but you can and must decide that you want this and will be satisfied with nothing else. And then you will discover that Christ is giving you all this and more. And men and women will look at you and see not you but Christ, and that will be your victory.

Your affectionate and encouraged father,

ROBERT ALLEN.

